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## Beau Revel\*

A SCINTILLANT NOVEL OF MANHATTAN'S MAD GAIETY

By Louis Joseph Vance

Author of "The Lone Wolf," "Joan Thursday," "The Black Bag," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LESTER RALPH

"LARRY—" Mrs. Lathom began, and her pensive inflection drew from Revel a quick, sidelong glance colored by a faintly apprehensive crinkling of eyebrows.

"*Je suis*," he murmured, and waited watchfully.

Divining the subtle tribute in this attitude, Mrs. Lathom smiled the smile of ironic introspection which is one sign of humored vanity—a smile that lingered as she pursued:

"Larry—how long have you been pestering me?"

"Pestering? Oh, making love!"

"Well—tell me how long; have you any notion?"

Revel answered readily in his most matter-of-fact manner:

"Eleven months, two weeks, three days, and some odd hours."

"Dear old fraud!" Hints of latent laughter played over the exquisite texture of her voice like moonlight on running water. "Larry, I simply adore the way you play the game. A woman does like a man to rattle off a glib, unblushing lie instead of fumbling for the truth in a foggy memory. Any other woman, Larry, would let you get away with it, just to show appreciation of your uniqueness."

"Uniqueness? Lovely word! Makes one feel caught red-handed in something agreeably abandoned."

"So you have been caught—fibbing. We met here, in the Crystal Room, ten months ago to-night. Seeing Angie Earle just now reminded me. It was she who introduced us, the night her husband sailed for France."

"Ten months is a long time," Revel commented, not at all abashed. "How

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much longer do you think you can hold out, Alice?"

"That's what's troubling me. I've been so patient with you, wondering if you'd ever ring true. Well, you haven't yet, you know. If you had, just once—"

"You doubt me?" complained Revel, incredulous and aggrieved.

Alice Lathom dropped the accent of ba-

adonation. Surely the fairest creature that ever breathed, this woman at his side, the simple dignity of her loveliness dimming every flaming, insolent face in that room, whose enchanted atmosphere lent all women intimations of comeliness beyond their fondest dreams.

"Larry, have you ever stopped to think what it would mean to you, to me, to both



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TO FIND YOU'VE GOT A MADLY-IN-LOVE  
MARRIED WOMAN ON YOUR HANDS,  
AND THE DEVIL TO PAY"

dinage, though the face she showed the world—their world, that drifted by on the dancing-floor and hedged them about with groups of friendly folk at adjoining tables—was, like Revel's, cast in a mold of amiable engrossment with the swaying, shifting pageant of the room.

"I mean, Larry," she said, "you never convince me, quite."

Under cover of business with cigarette and match, Revel uttered "My God!" in a hollow voice. Mrs. Lathom gave him a look edged with laughter, then renewed her gesture of impersonal amusement—sitting *en profile* to Revel, her pretty head poised with its rare suggestion of spirit and breeding, always so fetching, and too often, Revel thought, so disastrous!

He continued to observe her narrowly yet covertly, the half-amused smile of his eyes and lips masking a power of sheer

of us, if some day I were to surprise you by saying yes?"

"Have I? Well, rather!"

"I don't believe you. I've got a vivid notion you'd be the most disconcerted man in town." She laughed impishly in the face of his resentment. "I've said no so constantly—and meant no, too—you've come to believe I'll never say anything else. *Prenez garde, cher ami!* I'm not to be trusted."

"No woman is. Why reduce yourself to the mean?"

"What else have you been asking me



to do for ten livelong months but put myself on a par with the hundreds of women in New York who'd be glad to have an affair with you? Perhaps I'm about to succumb to your blandishments."

"No such luck."

"Don't be too sure. You may yet wake up some fine morning to find you've got a madly-in-love married woman on your hands, and the devil to pay. I mean it. You deserve an awful lot of trouble. You've been asking for it so long." Mrs. Lathom laughed again. "My goodness, but you'd feel sold if I should suddenly fall in love with you—after all!"

"Try me," Revel suggested in a dangerously quiet voice.

"I don't say no. You've had your warning. Now, on your head be it!" The woman looked straight at him. "Larry, you're forty-five." Revel groaned. "And I'm thirty—and something more."

"Nonsense! Your heart is eighteen, and your face—"

"Is only five hours old!"

"Its beauty, Alice, is born anew with every breath you draw."

Her fan of crimson ostrich feathers fell lightly upon his hand. She smiled and shook her head, reproving his extravagance, yet not ill-pleased. Then she was silent, in grave contemplation of that gay ensemble of which they seemed so essentially a part—that chamber of sumptuous theatrical illusion, unreal as a cavern of painted dreams, music-haunted, rumorously with low-pitched voices and sweet, soft laughter, perfumed with souls of stifled flowers and sensuous breaths of scented garments, where nightly beauty and desire resort decorously to play the dangerous farce of love in idleness.

Revel bent his head, smiling—for the benefit of innocent bystanders—the confidential smile of one communicating a bit of scandal.

"I love you," he whispered to the fragrance of her lustrous hair.

"I know. That's what's making all the trouble, isn't it?" She faltered. "I don't like my husband, and I do like you, and Frank doesn't like either of us."

"Been grousing about me?"

"A bit." One sleek white shoulder described a shadowy shrug. "Not that he suspects, really; he jumps at any and every excuse for a scene."

"I'm so sorry."

"That's one thing in your favor: I can always count on your sympathy."

"I've been through the same mill, you know."

"But a long time ago." She was briefly thoughtful. "How long is it now, Larry, you've been—unmarried?"

"Let's see—Dick's twenty-two. His mother quit me when he was nine."

"Why?"

"Incompatibility is the drawing-room term, I believe."

"I thought New York law recognized only one cause for divorce."

After a moment Revel said quietly:

"That is true."

A lull in the music brought their hosts, the Coldicotts, back to the table. Plump, pretty Amelia Coldicott sank into her chair with an explosive puff of relief.

"The music's *too* lovely!" she declared, fanning furiously. "One simply can't stop. But what on earth's the matter with you two—not dancing?"

"Larry and I are sentimental to-night," Mrs. Lathom answered. "We're waiting for a waltz. And this is it."

They threaded their way through the crush of chairs and tables to the cramped oval of the best floor in town.

"Thirteen years," the woman murmured to his shoulder, her smiling eyes ranging the room as they swung into the throbbing measures of the waltz. "Thirteen years all on your own, with nobody to answer to!"

"The good are always lonesome."

"Rubbish! You love your freedom. You'd be hopelessly upset if anything threatened it—if, for instance, I were to flop into your arms, crying: 'Fly with me! Give up New York and all it means to you—all for love and the world well lost!'"

"I dare you!"

"I'm afraid—I mean, I would be—that is, I think I ought to be. Somehow I can't quite see Larry Revel in any other rôle but that of lover-general to all the prettiest women in town."

"Somebody's been flattering me outrageously behind my back."

"I wonder! Larry, can you fancy yourself faithful to one woman for life?"

"Give me the right woman."

"You needn't squeeze my hand. How can I be sure I'm the right woman?"

"That's for me to say."

"I don't know—How many times have you said much the same thing in thir-



teen years? Oh, don't try to tell me! You don't know, and I don't want to, really. But you do know it's not for nothing you're called Beau Revel, and earnest blighters warn anxious husbands against you. How have you managed it, I wonder—so much success with so little trouble? Do tell me—I'm crazy to learn all about life!"

"It's simple enough, Alice," Revel chuckled, chiming with her whim. "When one's heart is God's little garden, women just can't help wondering what makes its innocence grow so rank; the line forms to the right. Of course—it's most discouraging—when they find out it's genuine, they go away bored. But thus it is that virtue earns one the fame of fortune's spoiled child."

"Larry," said the quiet voice at his shoulder, "you *are* a fraud. Must I tell you the truth about yourself?"

Again Revel's brow took on that apprehensive wrinkle.

"Every time you adopt that tone, Alice, I'm sure to hear something to my disadvantage. Let's talk about anybody else."

"I'm thinking only of you to-night."

"That's what worries me. You're a long sight too clever spontaneously, but when you take time to think, your analytic insight becomes purely diabolic."

"If you believe that, you ought to be afraid of me."

"I am, Alice—you don't know how dreadfully afraid of you I am."

"Yet you want me to give Frank the chuck and marry you."

"Even marriage isn't too much to pay for peace of mind. Once she's married, a woman ceases to bemoan her husband's faults and settles down to cultivate his virtues—when found."



MUSIC AND DANSEUSE WERE ONE THING AND THE SAME, AND THE SUAVE PHRASES OF  
HER GRACIOUS LIMBS WERE TRANSLATED INTO WAVES OF  
SOUND RAPTUREOUS AND LYRICAL

"It sounds fatiguing. I believe you're deliberately discouraging me."

"I am utterly incapable of such generosity."

For a mere instant the woman rested more intimately in his arms.

"You really want me very much, don't you, Larry?"

"You know—" Revel faltered thickly.

But the moment of yielding passed too quickly; before he could fairly grasp it he saw that she was nodding and laughing over his shoulder.

"The Coldicotts are madly wigwagging; they want to go. So you get a respite, Larry, that you don't deserve. Another twenty-four hours—forty-eight—Heaven only knows how long—before I make up my mind!"

## II

THE Coldicotts and the Lathoms inhabited the same Park Avenue apartment block, whereas Revel clung to his hopelessly out-of-the-world Gramercy Park address; so he found no excuse for squiring Alice farther than the curb beneath the carriage canopy.

Waving a last good night as the Coldicott car pulled out, he settled his topper at an inimitable angle—really less an angle than a bare hint of inherent doggishness—and, with quizzical humor lambent in his eyes, strolled over to the avenue, contentedly conscious of being very much in the picture of Beau Revel, and wondering what the deuce to do with the rest of the evening.

The night was still young, as nights went with Larry Revel—little after twelve—and the least inviting resort he could think of was home, where one might be sure of finding nothing but solid comfort. It was the loneliest hole in town since Dick, arrogating unto himself the inalienable rights of a bachelor with a vote, had with his father's entire approval moved to rooms of his own in the Fifties.

And to-night was no night for solitude and sober introspection, but distinctly a night to be heedlessly squandered indulging the mad exhilaration inspired by Alice Lathom's melting mood. Never, he assured himself, had he felt younger, more joyous and irresponsible—since the last time. The writer chap, What's-His-Name, was right, immorally right and wise, who said a man renews his youth every time he

falls in love. There was nothing like it, nothing! Only, of course, like everything delectable, it wouldn't stand analysis.

Pausing on Delmonico's corner, Revel conned the list of clubs where one might conceivably while away an hour or so in decent company, neither too steady-paced nor too rowdy. Of a sudden, chilled by the immediate, sepulchral menace of the Century, he shied and fled in a panic which wasn't wholly neutralized till, having put Forty-Second Street well behind him, he was appalled to find himself in the forbidding penumbra of the Union League. In desperation, then, he scuttled off the avenue and plunged headlong into the Brook, only to find it deserted but for Drummond Hale and the two Morleys—an argumentative group obstructing the fairway of the entrance.

"Ask Larry Revel," Drummond exclaimed. "Am I not right, Larry?"

"Monotonously, Drum. What's the row?"

"Oh, Drum's in a silly wax about Wilson's going over to France," said Tom Morley.

"He ought to preserve the prestige of his celestial aloofness," Revel offered. "He should be visible to mortals neither at home nor abroad. That is where the Supreme Being is so wise."

"Good old Larry!" Hale linked his arm. "Here's our taxi. Let's go!"

"Go?" Revel inquired, hanging back.

"Round to Nelly Steele's."

Revel freed his arm with an impatient jerk.

"Don't be an ass, Larry; it's the newest dance and supper club."

"Then why in the name of ennui—?"

"To see Nelly dance, of course—freshest, sweetest, prettiest thing in town!"

"I distrust your taste in women, Drum. However—this once."

In the cab, more misgivings visited Larry.

"I crave amusement—and you offer me the tawdry torment of a dance-hall masquerading as a rendezvous for decent folk—"

"Smartest place in town," Drummond Hale asserted.

"And I have not been there?"

"Oh, Lord!" Roger Morley groaned.

"Stop the cab and put him out."

"It might be a true kindness—though I know you don't mean it that way. Where



is this highly respectable honk-a-tonk, anyway?"

"It's an old stable in Fifty-Sixth Street. McLynn, Reed & Wright made it over—all in late nondescript or something."

THEY  
SWUNG  
INTO THE MOVE-  
MENTS OF THE  
DANCE WITH A  
HARMONY OF THOUGHT  
AND ACTION SIGNIFI-  
CANT OF SOMETHING  
MORE THAN CASUAL  
ACQUAINTANCE

"Mid-Victrolian, I believe," Drummond Hale corrected.

"Sounds like a house of ill-shape," Revel suggested. "As architects, McLynn, Reed & Wright put up striking bills. Who's the infatuate financier?"

"Nelly isn't telling. But they do say she's doing it all on her own. Anything is possible in New York to-day, even virtue."

"Pessimist!"

Tom Morley took umbrage.

"Oh, dry up, Larry!

Nelly Steele's all right.

I know she's all right. Mrs. Rossiter Wade stands sponsor for her."

"Then somebody ought to know who Nelly Steele is."

"It's enough for me to know that she's the most delightful dancer—"

"Ballroom, do you mean, or desperational?"

"Judge for yourself. We're here."

In the featureless exterior of the reformed stable, a solitary wrought-iron lamp cast an uncertain light over a non-committal doorway. The four men passed through a small vestibule into a capacious



and invitingly arranged lounge, where Revel and the Morleys waited while Drummond Hale registered them as his guests.

A slender barrier with provision for curtains stood between the lounge and the main room, where, beneath a shallow gallery, a low platform held tables set apart by sketchy frames of lattice with climbing vines. More lattice-work screened walls whose coloring gave atmospheric depths of silver, blue, and lilac-gray. Draperies in the same scheme masked the roof, streaming wide from a great high globe of iridescent glass that burned like a goblin moon. Lamps like lesser moons glowed on every table.

In as many seconds Revel discovered a score of friendly faces in the throng of dancers, and amiably acknowledged their smiles and nods. Then, in surprise and gratification, he saw Dick swinging by, a girl resting lightly in his arms, her hair like red gold against the black of his shoulder. Dick's head inclined intimately toward the half-averted head of his partner, his lips were laughing as they murmured. The two reversed and slipped away, melting into the harlequin swirl, and the father smiled to himself with softened eyes. For the first time he saw Dick making love—doing it rather well, too, deftly and effectively, the way Dick did most amusing and decorative things.

The waltz ending, Drummond Hale rejoined the party and the *maitre d'hôtel* led them to a table at the back of the room. The light was fading swiftly as they settled down. Overhead the captive moon grew dim and dull and was no more, and the little table-lamps winked out, leaving a deep gloom stung by scattered cigarette-tips like inquisitive eyes of fire. Between lounge and dancing-floor long draperies swept together. Strains of Chaminade sank through the scented dusk. Expectancy muted the rumor of vivacious voices. There was a stimulating hush.

A shaft of pure white light cut down from the gallery and surprised the startled figure of a woman near the curtains.

Like one waking from a dream she stirred, smiled, swept a slow, deep curtsy to her unseen audience, then rose and waited for its fluttering applause to still.

She was any age you please between twenty and thirty, but the spirit of her was sheer youth. Symmetrical, without true slenderness, neither tall nor small, ex-

quisitely poised, she was something for amazement and delight, at once inaccessiblely ethereal and adorably of this good, rich earth. Tawny hair in captivating disarray framed a face perhaps not beautiful, but wholly winsome with its purity of color, its lips delicately apart, its wide eyes of wonder. She wore—no matter what—dainty wisps of chiffon over chiffon, opalescent, with a jeweled girdle and jewels glistening on her feet, in her hair, on her rarely rounded wrists.

At pause in anticipation of her cue, her gaze embraced every quarter of the room with a look of confidence yet appeal, with a shadowy smile at once shy and trustful. You felt that it was for you alone in all that gathering she meant to dance; that upon your sympathy and approbation depended her dearest hopes.

The music, grown faint, found new strength, swelled into full volume; and like a leaf caught up by the wind the girl abandoned her sweet body utterly to its sweeping drift. She did not dance so much as let herself be wafted upon pulsing tides of melody, of which she somehow seemed strangely a part, so that music and *danseuse* were one thing and the same, and the suave phrases of her gracious limbs were translated into waves of sound rapturous and lyrical.

There was no technique one might seize upon and praise for its perfection, but a seeming absence of it; yet nothing was wanting, no nuance of gesture or expression, no elfin innuendo of lifted eyebrows, drooping lashes, demure lips, or flashing smile. She danced with all that was herself because she must, because she neither could nor wished to withhold any of the joy that quickened her like wine.

Caressing the music, by it caressed, she swung with the spot-light round the spacious floor, and up it and down, again and yet again, till the ebbing waves of sound forsook her, a fluttering shape of loveliness, near by the curtains—and sudden dark drenched the place where she had been.

The lights burned up, but Nelly Steele was gone.

For moments there was no sound, only the breathless tribute of ravished delight; then applause like a storm, gusty, inappeasable.

For an encore she gave them something of Granados, a dance which, without aid of costume, fan, or mantilla, she none the

less made supremely Spanish, yet inimitably her own. But now Revel's interest was divided. He had discovered Dick at a table in the most distant corner; and all the while the woman danced the father saw the eyes of his boy follow her in love and longing.

A strange pang wrung the heart of Larry Revel, a pain whose source he did not know, an emotion whose nature he was curiously reluctant to surmise.

### III

"EH?" Revel roused with an unfeigned start. "Oh, charming, charming! But how long has this thing been going on, please?"

"Little over a week," said Tom Morley.

"Still, you'd think some thoughtful soul might 've told me."

"Dick might. But it seems Dick didn't."

"Wise child—knows his father too well," commented Hale.

"Too well to think I'd dream of interfering with his amusements," said Revel.

"I wouldn't trust you, if you were my father—which God forbid!"

"Thanks, Tom; that makes it unanimous," Larry returned.

"If you ask me, Dick's by way of taking his amusements rather seriously."

Hale's nod drew attention to the floor, which, with the disappearance of the dancer, had been reinvaded by a flock of fox-trotting dilettanti. But it was not yet so thronged that Revel found it difficult to follow Dick's eager progress toward the lounge, where Nelly Steele, returned from her dressing-room, was awaiting him.

Nor was the distance so great that one could misinterpret the liking in her smile for him, the frankness of her yielding to his arms, or the consummate sympathy with which they swung into the movements of the dance—with a harmony of thought and action significant of something more than casual acquaintance.

The flavor of such observations lingered, inevitably coloring Revel's mental attitude, as he worked through the crowded floor at the close of the fox-trot, till a turn of chance, not altogether uninvited, brought him face to face with Dick and Nelly Steele.

"Why, dad!" There wasn't a shadow of constraint in Dick's hail, but the never-failing accent of pleasure which was one of

the things that made their relationship so unusual, as between father and son, and so gratifying. "Nelly, this is the best friend I've got."

The girl had clear, straightforward eyes, and a manner to match; her hand was firm and cool.

"I'm so glad, Mr. Revel. Dick talks so much about you."

"Lucky I trained the beggar to be thrifty with the truth!"

"You don't think he's told me the truth about you?"

"Heaven forbid! I hope he doesn't know it."

"We're going to have a bite to eat, dad. Won't you—?"

"Do, Mr. Revel!"

"I've had one supper already, and—Tell you what—I'll stop for just one more drink."

At the table they found Rossiter Wade 2nd, only son of that Mrs. Wade whose formidable social influences were said to have been mobilized in support of this enterprise of Nelly Steele's. He was with Mrs. Benzoni—Queenie Palmer, of local stage fame, till marriage gave her that foothold from which, with an ingenuity so common to the women of America, she had fought her way into the inner circle—a cheerful body, clever enough to be unpretentious, always well-groomed and good to look at.

Perceiving Revel, she uttered a small squeal of exaggerated delight.

"Larry! Sit right down here and make love to me. Ross and Dick are mad about Nelly Steele, and I've been neglected all evening, and I'm bored silly."

"Disappointed in Dick. As for Ross—why don't you speak to him about it?"

"I have, but he's reduced to imbecility every time he sees Nelly dance."

To Revel's huge amusement, Wade colored. He was a horsy sort, rangy, pink, inarticulate, with sullen eyes. Apparently a hopeless waster, content to remain dependent upon his mother, somewhere in his background lurked an impossible wife. Revel's memory wasn't quite clear whether the break had been legal or informal. In either event it had been successful; the woman was never visible.

"Don't blame me, do you, Queenie?" Wade muttered sheepishly.

"No-o—but that doesn't keep me from being humanly jealous. No, Ross; I'm fed



SHE MADE AN INVITING GESTURE OF  
FUN WITH HANDS FULL OF CHINAWARE.  
"GOOD AFTERNOON, MR. REVEL!"

up and cross. Go and dance with Nelly, and leave me to gossip with Larry. He won't neglect me. He never neglects any woman—do you, Larry?"

"Sometimes," Revel confesser' modestly—"by request."

Wade and the Steele girl romped off to the row of a one-step. Dick, openly disgruntled, hung in the wind. Mrs. Benzoni put out a hand to Revel.

"Cigarette, please. And, Dick—your father and I want to talk secrets."

"In that case, this is no place for pure-minded youth. I'm off!"

Dick quartered the room for another partner, pointed, and darted away.

"Nice kid," said Queenie, her elbows on

the table, a cigarette clipped between her admirably delineated lips. "Pity he's yours."

"Why?"

"The way he's going he'll turn out to be as worthless as you are, Larry. And the boy's got good stuff in him, too good to be thrown away on this sort of thing, the futile way we live—"

"H-m!" Revel's grunt indicated relief. "Thought you meant Nelly Steele."

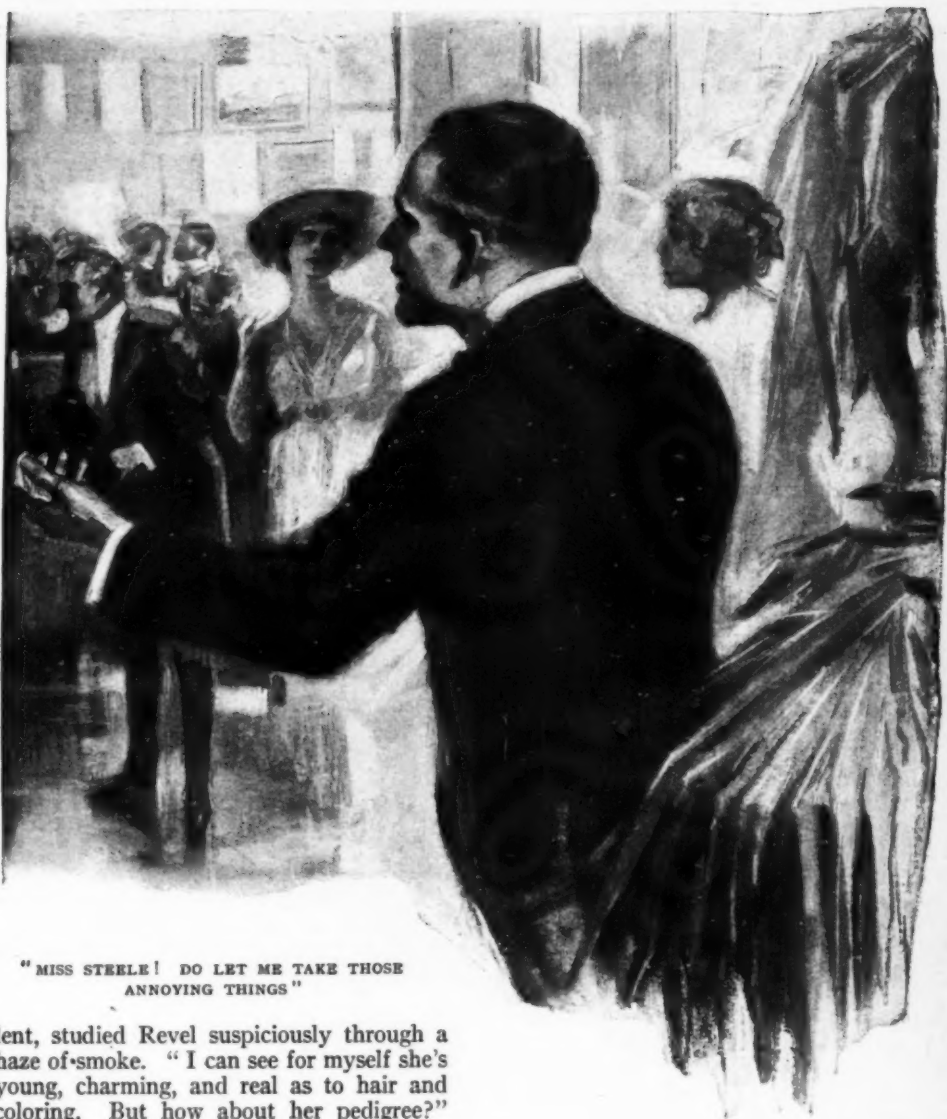
"Don't worry; Nelly's head is perfectly level. Besides, she's years older."

"Many?"

"Oh, three or four—which, of course, is equivalent to much more."

"Tell me about the girl." Queenie, si-





"MISS STEELE! DO LET ME TAKE THOSE  
ANNOYING THINGS"

lent, studied Revel suspiciously through a haze of smoke. "I can see for myself she's young, charming, and real as to hair and coloring. But how about her pedigree?"

Queenie removed her cigarette and inspected its ash intently.

"Larry," she said, "you've known me a long time, and you always were nice to me, 'specially at first, when the going was tough. Not only that, but I'm a natural-born cat, and in a fiendish temper to-night besides. If I knew anything to the discredit of Nelly Steele, I'd spill it out of affection for you and devilment combined; but I don't. She comes of stage people. Used to dance alone in the Dillingham shows. Then she had a vaudeville dancing-act with a crea-

ture named Phyfe, but he was no good *any* way. When she wanted to try this stunt, I got Mrs. Wade interested in her. She's right as rain. Some day she'll make some man a good husband."

"You think that possible?"

"In spite of my luck, yes." The woman hesitated, then in abrupt passion ground out the fire of her cigarette in a crystal tray. "Oh, I don't know! Everything seems such a mess. Larry, tell me what to do. Benzoni's playing the

giddy goat about Nora Nettleton, and—it just makes me sick. I don't know whether to go on pretending I'm a blind ninny, or to get a legal separation."

"Separation? Why not a divorce?"

"No; thanks, ever so. If I divorced Benzoni, I could marry again. Marriage is no good for the likes of us, anyway. Marriage—it's the dream of half a woman's lifetime, the nightmare of the other half."

"Marriage," Revel propounded, oracular, "is merely mirage misspelled."

"Why must it always be so, Larry?"

"Because of this sort of thing. What is it? Another illustration of our proud motto. 'It's never too late to spend': the most exclusive night club in town, that is to say, the most expensive; one more phase of a saturnalia of spending that puts history to the blush and is the breath of life to our lot altogether."

"What's that got to do— Why shouldn't we throw away money when we've got more than we know what to do with?"

"No reason on earth, so long as it satisfies our highest aspirations; which it does. Wasting money is only one form of the extravagance we're bred to. All our training teaches us there's no price too great to pay for what we want. The higher the cost, the more complete the sense of gratification—possession. We all want love, and we know it can be bought, so when we pay the highest imaginable price—marriage—we flatter ourselves we've purchased a treasure rust and moth cannot corrupt or thieves break in to steal. Too often we wake up to find we've been rooked like fun. Even marriage, Queenie, can't buy love."

"Nothing can buy love—"

"Oh, yes it can—love can buy love; but nothing else, nothing less."

"Oh, all right! But you aren't telling me how to get Benzoni away from that—"

"I'm leading up to it; breaking it to you gently, Queenie. Look here! Let's have the truth—do you love Benzoni?"

"Why, I suppose—" the woman faltered in a stare. "I don't know."

"You never did—and neither did he. You each had a hankering for what the other had: Benzoni for your beauty, you for what marriage to him would mean; what you've got out of it. And each believed and told the other it was love. How long have you been married—ten years?"

"Seven."

"Long enough, at all events, for you to have learned to like each other."

"But we do. I'm as fond as I can be of Benzoni. That's why I'm so furious when I think of his making such a silly show of himself."

"And he's fond of you in the same way. But, Queenie, think how wearing it would be if he were any fonder." A begrudged twinkle lighted the mutinous eyes above the rim of Queenie's glass. "As I thought, you don't relish Benzoni's making you ridiculous by making a private, or more or less public, exhibition of his weaknesses—which you married and have done your best to cover ever since. It's just sensitive vanity on your part, not jealousy in the true sense."

"Jealous? Of that—*thing*? I should hope not!"

"There you are. Now, how old is Benzoni—forty? The dangerous age in man, when he looks back on a record of mistakes and wasted chances to be naughty, and forward to the trap upon the pit. You can't stop Benzoni by pointing out his foolishness; that will only make him feel no end of a dog. Men of his age glory in their follies. One glaring, red-blooded indiscretion, they think, puts them back on a par with the youth they squandered being good. It's their wisdom and stability, the fruit of their years, that they're ashamed of and try to hide."

"Then what *am* I to do?"

"One of two things—pack up and leave without notice, or—"

"But isn't that just what Benzoni wants—his freedom?"

"It's probably what he thinks he wants, now, when he's full of the astounding discovery that he can do without you. Of course, it never enters his head that you could possibly worry along without him. If you strike first, wounded vanity 'll bring him round like a shot. He'll camp on your door-step, howl like sin about his injuries, and if you show one sign of relenting, he'll come in and lick your hand and crawl under the table and be a perfectly good dog—till the next time."

"Till the next time? Then that's no cure."

"I don't say it is; but it's one way. The other is to sit tight and grin cynically. Marriage is Nettleton's price. You may have to divorce Benzoni—in which case you'll have your freedom and alimony and

the right on your side. But the chances are he'll stick at matrimony, Nora will hand him his passports, and he'll be frightfully sick about it; in which case you'll have the whip-hand—and the cure will be lasting."

Wade and Nelly Steele returning from their dance, Revel continued smoothly:

"Dare say you are right. Perhaps matrimony would be good for me."

"You!" Wade uttered explosively, dropping thunderstruck into his chair.

"Don't pay any attention to him," Queenie counseled. "That's Larry's stock remark when caught talking about things he oughtn't to."

"But quite seriously," Revel insisted with a straight face, "I can't make up my mind whether or not I ought. I'm getting on, you know, to that stage when man begins to appreciate that marriage has its points; that it can attain the sane dignity of a business arrangement—such as engaging for life an agreeable housekeeper for a home in the windy wastes of Westchester, where one can spend one's knickerbockered years as landed gentry, sowing tame oats, intensively cultivating uninteresting neighbors, breeding Fords and dogs, and—every night, gazing wistfully into the south, at the glow in the sky that marks the spot where New York burns and pulses, wicked but—alive!"

#### IV

It was three o'clock or thereabout when Revel tumbled into bed, thoroughly tired and thoroughly content with the figure he had cut throughout what wore in retrospect the complexion of a rather crowded but most satisfying, and on the whole edifying, night.

His mental processes began to lose coherence, but remained uneasily aware of a claim upon them ignored but importunate, the question of that singular sensation of pain he had experienced on detecting the nature of his son's attitude toward Nelly Steele—a sensation mysteriously and profoundly disturbing, elusive.

Consciousness languished in pervading wonder as Revel perceived, bending over him, a vision of Alice Lathom, benign with intimations of infinite beauty.

But he came awake late in the morning with a mind preoccupied with memories of Nelly Steele—a phenomenon so comprehensible that it gave him no con-

cern. He must have been a dull clod indeed to entertain no charming reminiscence of Nelly's dancing. As well require that a man, because he is in love, shall be numb to the music of broken waters, the pathos of autumnal twilight, the fragrance of violets.

He arrived an hour late at his offices in the Equitable Building; but that was nothing so extraordinary as to cause comment on the part of the small staff that did most of his work for him. Revel was fond of saying that any business demanding more than two hours' care a day was organized in a most unbusinesslike way.

To-day he spent far more time than was customary with him idling in a tilted chair, his back to the desk, hands clasped behind his head, abstracted gaze astray in the spreading panorama of New York harbor commanded by his eighteenth-story window, and comprehending nothing of it whatever. For the most part he was visioning a future wherein Laurence Revel Esq., Beau Revel no more, paced sedately, a very much married man, looking neither to the right nor the left of the way, but at the wish of the wholly adorable woman at his side, Alice, his wife, gentle and wise and kind—

And more than once he roused from these preoccupations with a humorously wrinkled nose of disconcertment. However enchanting the prospect when it included Alice as his possession, it was to a degree sobering when it presented himself as hers. After thirteen years of untrammelled ranging, it was questionable how gracefully he would take to the curb and fenced home pastures. As a matter of fact, he conceded, if the truth must be told without reserve, that he couldn't quite see himself. Yet he was in for it; in too deeply for self-extraction without broken faith and a shamed face.

That was the devil of it, this business of falling in love. If the woman was any way worth while, love and marriage were invariably synonymous to her; whereas any fool knew that they were not even remotely related. And this in spite of whatsoever experience the woman might have had, however harrowing, however disenchanting.

It was surprising, and had Revel stopped to consider he might have found it disquieting, how frequently this grave web of reverie was lighted by flashing thoughts of Nelly Steele, luminous memories of the

suave movements of her sweet young body through the murk of the dancing-room, a wraith of beauty tracing evanescent shapes of magic as bland and seemingly effortless as a swallow's flight.

A notion began to take form that it might be well to see something more of Nelly Steele—outside of her professional environment, if it could be managed—on Dick's account, of course.

As it fell out, Revel dropped in for tea at Angela Earle's Macdougall Alley studio that same afternoon.

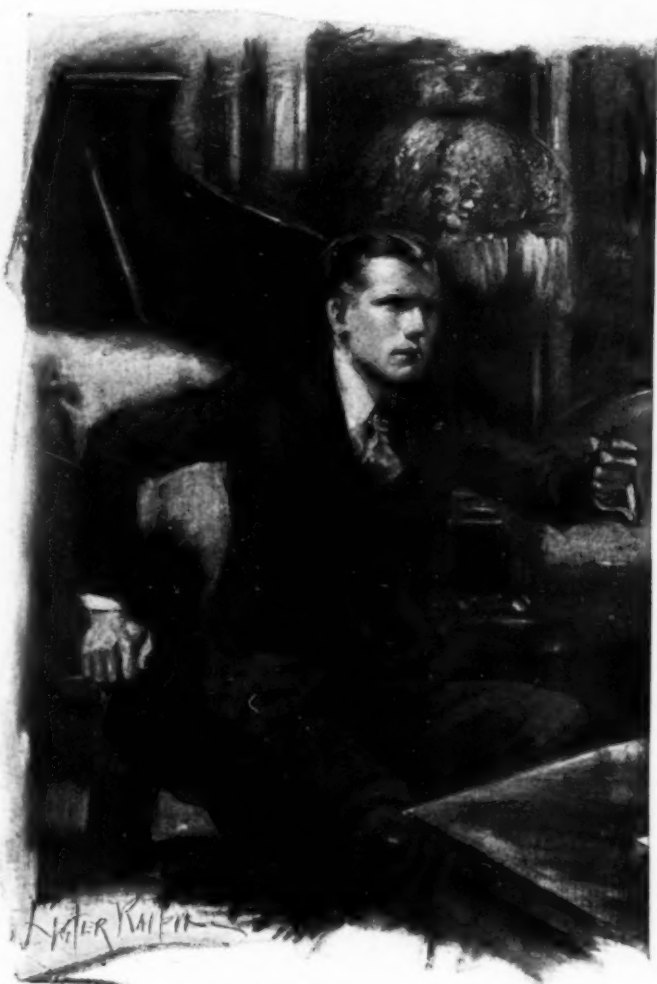
He nerved himself against the ordeal not through any true perversity of humor or gluttony for punishment, but simply because, his efforts to get in touch with Alice by telephone having assayed blank failure, he rather hoped to find her there. She had a kind heart, so she sometimes poured for Angela on those unspeakable Fridays of hers. But after a peering and futile tour of crowded, clamorous rooms, bleakly lighted and smelling abominably of turpentine, minor poetry, and Bolshevik cigarettes, Revel gave up hope.

He was working his way by brute force and cajolery toward the door when an eddy in the crush caught him and swung him into a comparatively quiet backwater, where he paused for a moment to rest his poor feet, recover his breath, and appraise damages.

Here he became conscious of the amused regard of a distinctly good-looking young person. Without committing the impertinence of a direct stare, he managed to acquaint himself with an effect of plum-colored *tailleur* and blue-fox furs, blue-gray

eyes, translucent skin, and hair like burnished copper beneath a smart little fur toque—a satisfying scheme well carried by a straight young body of confident yet unpretentious poise.

Nelly Steele's eyes laughed response to



"YOU THINK I'M TOO YOUNG TO MARRY. NATURALLY, YOU'RE PREJUDICED—"

his dawning look of surprise and recognition. She made an inviting gesture of fun with hands full of chinaware.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Revel!"

"Miss Steele! Do let me take those annoying things."

She surrendered them willingly. Revel looked round for some place to dispose of them, and found himself hemmed into a



corner with no window-sill or table handy—nothing but a long-suffering divan on which assorted gossips perched like sparrows on a telegraph-wire, chattering as volubly. With a muttered "Pardon," he stooped and shot the collection of crockery

Humor enriched her voice, he noted, like flakes of gold in *eau de vie de Dantzic*.

"Indeed, yes. I've just had a *vers libertine* confer upon me the distinction of talking to me as if I were a moral peer. I'm afraid I was a bit gauche in my embarrassment. He left me abruptly, with parting looks of pity and pain."

"That's the trouble. We eccentric outsiders are so lamentably uninstructed in the rock-bound conventionalities of these good people, we can hardly hope to escape shocking them." Revel wagged a melancholy head. "How ruthless is time! I remember so well the days when Bohemia knew no laws; when the natives did as they pleased, and didn't fear the finger of scorn if they liked daily baths, becoming frocks, unbobbed hair, and being seen above Fourteenth Street now and then."

Reckoning that he had exhausted the possibilities of this vein, he abandoned it forthwith.

"Are you alone?"

"Very much—saving your presence. Mrs. Wade brought me, but had to run on to some other appointment. I told her not to call back; I'd go home in a bus. But I really don't quite know how to get out through this mob. Is it late?"

"Almost six."

"And I promised Dick I'd be dressed and wait-

ing at seven! He's going to give me dinner, and then we hope to see part of a play."

Revel nodded, eying the approaches to the door.

"The crowd seems a bit thinner. If you'll permit me to take you home in a taxi—I'll forge ahead, and you can follow in my wake, and perhaps you'll escape intact."



"NO-O. I OUGHT TO BE, AFTER MY LIFE WITH YOUR SAINTED MOTHER, AND WHAT I'VE SEEN MY BEST FRIENDS GO THROUGH"

under the divan, between two pairs of indifferent feet.

"You do know your way about, don't you?"

"Oh, I come here rather frequently. It's good for the soul to be patronized every so often by the villagers. You've noticed, no doubt, how winningly Angela's protégées unbend?"

It was quite dark when they found themselves in open air.

"You are kind," said Nelly Steele. "I'd never have managed alone."

Odd how the indifferent illumination of the alley seemed to seek her face and dwell in her clear, smiling eyes!

"Youth will be served. I know you don't want to keep Dick waiting. Youth doesn't understand that; it needs years to teach a man that waiting for a pretty woman has its pleasures and its value, too. It takes patience to instil appreciation of reward."

Her sharp glance up at his face warned him that her quick perceptions had detected the personal note which, without his intention, but through sheer laxity of habit, had crept into his attitude. He hailed a passing taxi.

She named a quiet residential hotel in the lower Fifties, east of the avenue.

"I know," he said, as he settled down by her side. "Decent little hole."

"I love it. Mother finds it dull, but I—well, I *am* getting to be a snob. I do like to live quietly, after the noisy hotels we've always stopped at."

"You like the change of conditions altogether, I imagine?"

"I never want to go back. Of course, this won't last forever."

"No; if nothing else happens, you'll marry."

"I'm not thinking of that."

He was sensitive to an encouraging accent of settled purpose.

"Then you're not afraid of falling in love?"

"That's different. I'm not so silly as to hope I can escape."

"Then—don't think me impertinent—what are you driving at in life?"

She deliberated briefly, her eyes now gravely leveled directly ahead, up the be-dizened vista of the avenue.

"I want," she said soberly, "to make money, lots of money, so mother and I need never again worry about—things. If the club goes on as well as it promises to, I'll only need a year or two more. You see, Mr. Revel"—her smile shone softly in the broken illumination of passing lights—"I'm a hopelessly mercenary young woman. A woman of the stage has got to be selfish or go under. That's the first lesson. Some never learn it; others, like me, harden young." She laughed consciously.

"Dick says I'm the best business woman he knows."

"I think I understand." The reminder was timely. "Known Dick long?"

"Little over a month. We met through Mrs. Wade one day, at tea. He's a dear boy. I'm awfully fond of him."

Revel measured a neat pause, then:

"Dick's fond of you, too," he said quietly.

Quick to the values of timing and intonation, she stirred sharply in her corner.

"In love with me, you mean? Oh, I hope he isn't!"

"Must it mean unhappiness for Dick?"

She shook her head gently and sighed.

"I don't want him to be unhappy. Oh, why can't he just *like* me? Why must he fall in love with me? Why must people be so stupid about falling in love on the slightest provocation, or none?"

"My dear young woman, if you don't mind my saying so, I don't consider you 'the slightest provocation, or none.'"

"That's very sweet, but—" She gave a despairing gesture. "I don't want Dick to. He's so inclined to take things tragically."

"I think you know Dick pretty well."

"I know men a little. I've had to learn. I know there's more than one kind of man. Dick's not—usual. He—he's a dear!"

The taxicab swung off the avenue, and Revel identified the canopy in front of her hotel.

"Beastly unsympathetic taxi!" he grumbled. "Evidently accustomed to married couples only. Too bad! I'd have liked a longer talk."

She offered her hand, and returned his clasp with a pressure cool but friendly.

"Another time, perhaps. Thank you so much!"

Revel drove home in a thoughtful temper, but not ill-pleased. Apparently Dick was in no danger of premature or otherwise unsuitable marriage. The girl was distractingly intelligent and tempting, but she knew her little book. Nothing but money, a great deal of money, would ever persuade her to relinquish her present freedom, when every advantage was to her in her relations with the world—that is to say, with man—for bonds of wedlock. Well named—bonds of wedlock!

Nearly an hour later he stopped short with the knot of his white dress-tie only half-way toward that point of impecca-

bility which was his pride, and for a long minute stood frowning darkly at the dark, frowning countenance of the counterfeit Larry Revel in his dressing-mirror.

In that moment the secret was poignantly revealed to him of that strange distress which had visited him the night before on seeing the look in Dick's eyes as they followed the dancing of Nelly Steele. It was envy, Revel now knew, that he had felt, plain envy that had stabbed his heart—envy of the boy's capacity for generous, whole-hearted love, such untarnished devotion as twenty-two can know and give and forty-five can but remember with wistfulness, repining for the thing that was and is now no more.

## V

ON that Sunday Revel awoke in an amiable frame of mind which carried him humming through the rites of razor and tub, and smiling through the leisurely breakfast, the unhurried hour with the newspapers, and the still more deliberate process of dressing, which most of all he loved. Consequently his excellent good humor was unimpaired by the parting conference with his mirror.

If possible, it was even sweetened by his hour in church. Revel was wholly guiltless of any sort of religious persuasion. Such piety as had survived the wear of years existed as scraps of superstition toward which he was habitually apathetic, but at which he was wont automatically to clutch in moments of emotional stress, as when he wanted something very badly and didn't believe he was going to get it, or had done that which he should not have done and feared to be found out.

But it was now nearly a year since he had fallen into the church-going habit. For all her worldliness, Alice Lathom never missed a Sunday-morning service; and when Revel had secured a seat commanding an unobstructed view of the back of her head and the sweet round of one cheek, he adored with exemplary regularity.

After service he met Alice and the Coldicotts on the steps of the church, and ambled with them as far as Park Avenue. When they paused to say good-by, the Coldicotts suggested a small dinner and bridge to follow as the one possible way to counteract the debilitating influence of that deadliest of modern institutions, a Sunday evening in town.

Revel demurred till Alice, by means so delicate that he himself was unable to define it, communicated her desire that he should accept. Understanding from this that Frank Lathom would not be present, he confessed inability to stand out against the allure of bridge, and went his way discreetly gladdened.

A slow saunter down the radiant noon-day avenue contributed measurably to his elation. He saw any number of pleasant people he knew, picked up a quarter-dozen of the right sort, and lunched them to admiration at Sherry's, spontaneously saying one or two good things, thriftily memorized to do double duty at dinner. He dissipated the rest of the afternoon in clubs, and, still in the happiest of moods, drifting back to his rooms to dress, found them full of smoke, desperation, and Dick.

The young man occupied the roomiest chair, sprawling largely on the nape of his neck and the small of his back, limp arms and long, dejected legs overflowing. His hair was anarchistic, his eyes volcanic, his mouth calamitous. On a stand at his elbow a tall whisky-and-soda rested untouched, and an ash-tray abrim with half-consumed cigarettes exhaled a pestilential reek. A brilliant representation of young love in the dumps; only at some cost of credulity might one accept it as unstudied, when one remembered the penchant for the picturesque that ran in the Revel strain. Nevertheless, Revel preserved untwitching lips and sympathetic eyes as, surrendering hat, coat, and stick, he dismissed his valet with a look.

"Waiting long, Dick? Wish I'd known." Revel strolled over to the chair and dropped a light hand on the boy's shoulder. "What's on the good old mind?"

Dick uttered an incoherent grunt, then the one word adequate:

"Hell!"

"Large order! How'd you get it?"

"You'll laugh at me." Dick ran distracted hands through his hair, plumbed the depths of his trouser-pockets with them, and relapsed into abject glooming, chin on chest. "I don't want to bore you."

"No fear! And even so, you've got to talk, you know. That's what you're here for; and it's the only safe outlet man knows for any real trouble."

With an impatient growl the boy stretched forth a hand, but his father, in

a manner of complete abstraction, took up the glass just in time to let Dick's fingers grasp emptiness. Strolling round the room, hesitating now and then for ruminative sips, he expounded, didactic:

"Drink quenches no hell-fire of one's own kindling. Rather it adds fuel to the flames. So I sacrifice my abstemious principles to do you good."

Dick sulked. Pausing, Revel eyed him doubtfully, deliberating on a wicked inspiration of the instant. "Kill or cure," he told himself. To be beforehand with Dick might prove half the battle. Yet he wavered; the boy was so confoundingly dear to him, so handsomely unhappy, it was hard to hurt him even for his good. And yet—what must be, must.

Revel consulted his watch and gave a well-feigned start.

"Bless me! No idea it was so late. Excuse me a moment, will you, my boy?"

He sat down at his desk with his back to Dick, rifled the pages of the telephone directory, and, drawing the instrument to him, called up:

"Murray Hill, four five two five, please."

The chair-springs creaked as Dick sat forward suddenly.

"Hello! Miss Steele, please—Miss Nelly Steele. Yes."

He heard Dick jump out of the chair, and pictured to himself the boy's questioning pose, innocent now of any self-consciousness.

A non-committal voice saluted the ear at the receiver:

"Hello! Who is this?"

"Miss Steele? Good evening. This is Mr. Revel."

A slight wait prefaced a more cordial tone, in which, however, surprise wasn't wanting:

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Revel?"

"I've been wondering if you'd care to lunch with me to-morrow. If you've nothing better to do, I'd like awfully well to continue our little talk."

"I'd love to, but—"

The voice was formal enough, but Revel was unabashed.

"Then you'll come? Good! Will the Gotham be agreeable—say, at one?"

Demure humor tinged the reply:

"It sounds most discreet. Yes—and thank you."

Revel hung up and turned in his chair,

to open astonished eyes at Dick looming over him with a thunderous countenance.

"Why did you do that?"

"Eh? Why not? Attractive young woman. Taxied her home from Angela Earle's tea-fight Friday. Had a most interesting talk, but not enough of it, you know."

The guileless stare served. Dick swung away in a manner at once apologetic and injured.

"Of course you couldn't know. I love her!"

Revel had a drawl of skeptical protest:

"Oh, no!"

Dick turned on him in a flash of rage:

"Why not? Why shouldn't I love her?"

"Easy, Dick! No reason on earth, if you're going in for that sort of thing."

"What sort of thing? What do you mean?"

A small pause lengthened, while Revel stared thoughtfully into the infuriated eyes of his son. Then he shrugged:

"Perhaps I don't understand—"

"You don't. I love Nelly Steele honestly. I want her to marry me."

"Oh, come now!"

"No—I'm in deadly earnest. She loves me, too!"

"It's got as far as that, already?"

"Well—she hasn't exactly said so, but I know. She couldn't deceive me to that extent."

"You know best, perhaps. But if you're satisfied about that, please—what the deuce are you so unhappy about?"

"Wade. I can't stand his hanging round her all the time, his insolent air of proprietorship, and his damnable arrogance toward me, just because I'm a few years younger. What right has he—a married man?"

"Married men haven't any rights, if you're seeking fundamental truths. All the same, sometimes they take them. I don't quite see how you're going to stop Ross. The girl's under such heavy obligations to his mother."

"That's what makes it all so impossible. As long as she's beholden to that grasping old harridan for money as well as social backing, Nelly's got to stand for Wade. And—and—I tell you—I can't—I won't—it drives me frantic!"

With a wide movement of exasperation Dick flung himself across the room and into the chair.



"Something's got to be done!"

Revel scowled at his half-emptied glass and set it on the mantel with meticulous care.

"What would you suggest?" he asked without turning.

"She's got to marry me."

There was a long silence. Revel remained apparently semihypnotized by the play of light in the pale-amber contents of his glass.

"She's got to marry me," Dick repeated. "It's the only way to put an end to an intolerable—"

Still Revel offered no comment. Behind him there was a sound of impatient shifting in the chair, then an explosive:

"Damn! Why don't you say something? Oh, I know well enough what you're thinking!"

"Do you?" Revel looked round in mild inquiry.

"You think I'm too young to marry. Naturally, you're prejudiced—"

"No-o. I ought to be, after my life with your sainted mother, and what I've seen my best friends go through, but—I find my views of late years more lenient toward institutions as well as men. Marriage is a tolerably rugged custom—stands up amazingly for anything so wide open to criticism."

"Then you'd marry again if—"

"If I wanted to—yes."

"But you don't want me to!"

"I'm not strong for early marriages, I admit. They're too seldom founded on any reasonable understanding. When the twain calm down, as a rule they discover they are one in nothing but servitude, and then another passion common to all humanity begins to assert itself—the imperative need for self-expression. Its first essays inevitably focus upon the environment—the individual attempts to dominate the environment—and selects the most conspicuous feature thereof, the husband or the wife, for initial subjugation. If the individual doesn't feel this impulse to dominate, he or she isn't worth being married to. If he or she does and tries it on, the struggle begins between two personalities each owning an inalienable right to self-expression; and no matter which wins or whether it's a draw, the holy bonds of matrimony are in a fair way to become the fetters of a hell on earth. Dick"—Revel clapped both hands on his boy's shoulders

—"Dick, don't ever marry for anything but love."

"That's all I'm thinking of."

"My impression was that you were proposing to do Ross Wade one in the eye."

"I want to protect her from him. No, I don't mean it that way. Eliminating Wade is a side issue, of course. I love her. So I want to marry her—you see."

"I see you want to marry her, but I don't see that she wants to marry you."

"You don't think she loves me?"

"That's as may be. I don't think she's the marrying sort."

The boy's eyes hardened.

"Just what do you mean?"

"Nelly Steele is one of the few clear-sighted women I've ever met. That kind doesn't marry for love primarily, nor for money, nor for social advantages, but for all three in one; and you haven't all three to offer her. Even if I settle on you what will be a handsome sum, coming from a man of my small fortune, you'll be far from wealthy as wealth goes nowadays. Socially, you're acceptable, it's true, but you haven't the influence to offset the hostility of Mrs. Wade—which Nelly will inevitably incur if she marries you. Finally, Nelly's no such fool as to underrate the handicap of a husband younger than herself."

Dick buried his face in his hands.

"You're breaking my heart!"

"Dear old son! I'm so sorry. Just remember—love isn't necessarily disappointed if it doesn't marry."

The boy jumped up, his face blazing.

"You sha'n't talk that way about Nelly!"

"To my mind, I compliment her intelligence when I suggest she has too much sense to marry when she doesn't have to."

"You impugn her honor when you make her out a mere mercenary. I tell you, I know she's—"

"You know nothing except that you love her blindly. Dick, let me tell you my considered belief: we all have our price, every last one of us. I have, you have, Nelly Steele has hers; and I can prove it."

"You can't. Damn it, I know she's—Why, dad, hardly a night passes that I don't see her from the club to the door of her hotel."

"And that proves what?"

"You've no right to question—"

"I have a right to raise every question concerning the woman with whom my boy's

happiness rests. Dick, we've been closer than most. Few fathers know their sons as I know you; few sons know their fathers as you know me. Yet you love me as I love you; your happiness is my first consideration. I can't stand idly by and see my son rush into marriage with a woman about whom neither you nor I know anything—except that she's completely charming. All I ask you to do is to test her, prove her either gold or dross, before you commit yourself."

"I've got no right to insult her with a doubt—"

"Is a legitimate question an insult? Dick, subtract her beauty; what have you left? Human flesh and blood, as common as yours and mine—whose frailty I know, few men better. If she proves better than the average, God bless you both! May you live happily forever after—that shall be my prayer."

Baffled, bewildered, almost in tears, the boy made a sullen gesture.

"What do you propose?"

"A simple test. Stay away from her for a fortnight."

"What good will that do?"

"I'll tell you when you've promised."

The boy hesitated with a sullen face. Revel extended a pleading hand. "Dick, I ask it of you—in fairness to my great love for you." Their hands met; Revel made his clasp firm. "You will not see her or write to her for a fortnight?"

"I promise—word of honor."

With a sigh, Revel released Dick's hand.

"Thank God!" he said with the simplicity of deep emotion.

"Now tell me what you expect this to prove."

"One of two things—that she is all you think she is, or that she is not."

"And—if she isn't—how will you prove that to me?"

A look weary and compassionate shadowed Revel's eyes.

"You have already seen that she doesn't hesitate to encourage a man almost twice her age—a divorced man with a reputation—God help me!—much too conspicuous for philandering."

"But you are my father, and her interest in me—"

"Dick," said Revel solemnly, "if I am right, two weeks from this Sunday, at midnight, Nelly Steele will be in these rooms with me, alone."

The boy started back with a cry of almost agonized protest:

"Ah, no!"

"If not, I not only withdraw every objection, I'll do everything in my power to facilitate an early marriage between you."

"Don't you know that if you—succeed—I'll never forgive you?"

"Even so, I shall have saved you from marriage with an unworthy woman."

"You will risk my love for you?"

"To assure your happiness—yes."

"I refuse to permit you—"

"You have given your word not to see or communicate with her in any way."

"Then give me back my word!"

"No. It is my duty to hold you to it."

"It's wrong, damnably!"

The boy faltered, turned aside, and dragged slowly toward the door.

"Dick!" In the doorway Dick turned, regarding Revel with haggard eyes. Revel moved toward him with a hand outstretched. "Good night, dear boy!"

In a sudden passion Dick made a violent motion as if to strike down the hand.

"God forgive you—"

Standing where he had been left, Revel heard the rattle of the door-latches, then the dull slam. A sense of fatality enchained his body and his mind as well. For several minutes he did not move.

*(To be continued in the July number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)*

#### AFFINITY

THOUGH myriad stars gleam down  
Through the darks of infinity,  
From out of the teeming void  
But one star shines for me.

Though many souls cry out  
In a passion of mystery,  
From out of that countless throng  
But one soul calls to me.

*Edgar Daniel Kramer*

# The Railroad Administration and Its Problems

A STATEMENT OF THE DIFFICULTIES WITH WHICH THE FEDERAL RAILROAD CONTROL HAS HAD TO DEAL, AN EXPOSITION OF ITS PRESENT FINANCIAL POSITION, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR A PERMANENT SOLUTION OF A GREAT NATIONAL PROBLEM

By Walker D. Hines, Director-General of Railroads

I ENTERED upon the discharge of my duties as director-general of railroads with the clear conception that a new era opened for the Railroad Administration with the signing of the armistice. Things which were reasonable during war must be reviewed now, and in many cases must be readjusted in the light of peace conditions. I felt that it would be both unfair and futile to expect the public in time of peace to acquiesce in inconveniences or unusual methods, although they were patriotically accepted during the war.

There is no more difficult governmental undertaking in this country than the one I have assumed, and certainly no governmental agency is subject to more thoroughgoing examination and criticism. I cannot hope for any measure of success without the cordial support of Congress and of the public. The railroad service is a public service, and must be rendered to satisfy the public; and the public will not be satisfied if made to feel that it is being arbitrarily or oppressively treated.

In discussing the railroad situation, I wish to show what the government has accomplished in the way of results since taking possession of the railroads as a war emergency in December, 1917.

The first result was the elimination of conflicting priorities and the unified control of traffic, even to the extent of preventing shipments except when they could be disposed of at destination, thus averting serious congestion. In the fall of 1918, despite the enormous volume of traffic, there was practically no congestion, and in this

respect the condition was radically different from what it had been in previous years. This was of material assistance in the conduct of the war, and prevented tremendous delay and injury to commerce and industry.

Second, in December, 1917, railroad labor regarded itself as grossly underpaid, because of the tremendous increase in the cost of living, and because of the very high wages paid in nearly every other industry. There was an insistent demand for radical increases in wages and for an improvement in working conditions. No adequate machinery existed to deal with these demands. Suspicion and distrust on the part of railroad labor toward railroad companies was at its high-water mark. There appeared no reasonable hope of solving the problem without government control. By means of government control, with the assurances which were given to labor and later carried out, uninterrupted continuance of work in a cordial spirit was assured.

Third, the financial situation of the railroads was most unfavorable. Their costs were mounting rapidly, and any possible solution of the labor problem under private management would have created an enormous additional burden. At the same time, the difficulty of obtaining corresponding increases in rates was almost insurmountable, on account of the different jurisdictions, interstate and State, which had to deal with the subject, and on account of the general public disbelief as to the necessity for such increases. This financial situation was restored by government control and the consequent guarantee of adequate rentals.

I believe there will be general assent that these three important objects could not have been adequately dealt with except through government control. Even if there is dissent on that proposition, it is still true that government control has become a fact. Moreover, the wages which have been established as a result of the war constitute a fact which will exert a continuing influence upon the railroad situation.

Nobody can deny that, broadly speaking, the wage increase, and also the eight-hour day, would have come under any circumstances. Industries under private control found it necessary to make heavy increases in wages and great improvements in working conditions. These were things toward which the world was moving, and the war merely made the world move faster in that direction, bringing about in twelve months what otherwise might have taken a much longer time.

Thoughtful people, no matter what they think about the abstract principles of permanent government ownership, will realize that it was fortunate in the extreme for railroad investors that the government was in position to step into the breach and temporarily stand the shock of this great and inevitable improvement of railroad wages and working conditions.

My appeal now is for support and understanding in the vastly difficult task of rendering an adequate public service during the temporary period of Federal control. I believe that support and understanding will be forthcoming more completely if the public appreciates the respects in which government control promoted the objects of the war, and also protected railroad investors. With these conditions understood, the way should be open for a more friendly appreciation of the earnest efforts which my associates and I are making to discharge to the satisfaction of the public the heavy responsibility temporarily placed upon us.

Everything is being done to promote a good and adequate service and to stimulate the efficiency of both officials and employees, and I am encouraged to hope for important improvements in these directions. Our efforts to this end are being pressed to the limit of our strength, regardless of the embarrassment which suddenly confronted us by the failure of the railroad appropriation at the close of the last session of Congress. The fact that we are temporarily meeting this difficulty does not, however,

mean that the appropriation is not sorely needed. Every one who has an interest in the welfare of the railroads, or in the welfare of the country, should support the necessary appropriation, so that it will be passed at the earliest possible moment after Congress meets.

#### FACTS OF THE FINANCIAL SITUATION

Meanwhile the financial situation resulting from the failure of the appropriation is being dealt with as adequately as possible, and every effort is being made not to interfere with the industrial equilibrium.

Unfortunately, the impression has gone out that the Railroad Administration has decided to cut off all improvement work, including additions, betterments, and maintenance. This is not a fact. What has happened is that we are taking steps to give the railroad corporations full opportunity to determine whether they should assent to the work which they must finance. It is the intention of the Railroad Administration to carry forward just as much betterment and maintenance work as possible, in order that labor may not be thrown out of employment unnecessarily, and in order that the railroads be kept in good repair and extended to meet the needs of the situation.

I wish also to try to remove the impression that the \$750,000,000 appropriation was needed to make up for losses sustained by the Railroad Administration. This was not the case. The appropriation was needed, and still is needed, to enable the government temporarily to carry expenditures made on behalf of the railroad companies, which will be gradually refunded by the railroad companies as they are able to finance their requirements otherwise.

When the appropriation shall be made, there will have been appropriated for the Railroad Administration a total of \$1,250,000,000. Out of this about \$200,000,000 represented the loss incurred in the calendar year 1918, due to the abnormal winter, and to the fact that the Railroad Administration had only six months of increased rates to meet twelve months of increased wages. Practically the entire balance of more than \$1,000,000,000 will represent money only temporarily tied up by the government in railroad operations. The more speedily the appropriation of \$750,000,000 can be made, the more rapidly the railroads will be able to refinance and begin the process of returning these large sums to the government.



The only loss sustained by the Railroad Administration during the year 1918 was the difference between the net operating income and the standard rental for the year, approximately \$200,000,000. The remainder of the appropriation includes \$381,806,904, required to settle accounts with the railroad companies for 1918, and \$368,193,096 for financing capital expenditures for 1919. When the appropriation is received, and the Railroad Administration is thereby enabled to settle the accounts for 1918, it will be carrying additions and betterments which the roads were unable to finance to the amount of \$290,918,283, together with long-time loans and deferred collections from some of the companies amounting to \$151,866,104. In addition thereto, approximately \$340,000,000 is tied up in working capital. This working capital will, of course, be recovered by the government at the end of Federal control, and substantially all the other amounts will be repaid by the companies when the financial situation is such that they can borrow money on fair terms.

Pending receipt of the appropriation from Congress, the Railroad Administration is not in a position to extend financial aid to the companies in furtherance of the definite policy of Congress, as expressed in the Federal Control Act, and it becomes necessary for the companies to borrow money either on the security of certificates of indebtedness of the Railroad Administration, or on their own securities, in order to take care of immediate corporate requirements. It is apparent, therefore, that the need for the appropriation will be no less when Congress again convenes.

#### A GREAT PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED

On the subject of a permanent solution of the railroad problem I will submit several suggestions.

I do not believe in government ownership as a permanent policy. I wish to see a policy adopted which will preserve, if possible, the advantages and economies of private initiative while meeting the public demand for adequate control.

A great many arguments on this subject seem to proceed on the assumption that we have an unlimited choice of methods, and that it is easy to find a satisfactory solution. It requires only a little thought to realize that this is not the case. We cannot go back to unrestricted private management,

and we ought not to go back to a method of regulation that proved unsuccessful. The condition of railroad regulation prior to Federal control was so far from satisfactory as to be almost hopeless. This indicates that there was something fundamentally wrong, and therefore we cannot expect an adequate solution without fundamental changes.

The object which any successful plan of regulation must accomplish is to attract adequate capital for the great development which must yet be brought about in order to meet the tremendous future expansion of American commerce. No plan which fails to accomplish this will deal with the situation successfully. It is useless to urge some makeshift treatment, when we are forced to admit that it will prove inadequate.

We cannot accomplish this result by resorting to the old method, merely putting a series of patches upon the especially noticeable holes which have been worn in it. Under the old method there is the difficulty that no standard whatever is prescribed by which to measure the return to be given upon capital invested in the railroads. The question of return was always subject to dispute. There was no agreement as to the investment, not even an agreement as to a proper rate of return; and what would produce an ample return on one railroad meant poverty or bankruptcy for another.

Moreover, under the old form of regulation, there was no sufficient contact between the regulating body and the business regulated. The managers would see adverse conditions developing, and would appreciate the necessity for prompt action; but the regulating body was not in position to have a corresponding insight into the situation. It could not act until the conditions had developed, had then been proved in a formal controversy, and had been argued and briefed and conferred about and decided; and perhaps by that time conditions had begun to change, so that the relief which had been badly needed and not accorded might be denied because no longer needed for the future. Such uncertainties defeated any adequate assurance to the capital invested in the railroads. All the conditions favored delay, hesitation, and non-action, except in extreme cases.

We must not deceive ourselves as to the way in which things worked in the past, and will work in the future unless there is a fundamental change. Consider the public

utilities throughout the country. Everywhere, no doubt, the public means to be just and fair, and the people in office do not desire to destroy the companies that serve their cities; but there is suspicion as to capitalization, distrust as to the necessity for the expense, extreme hesitation on the part of the people to increase their own expenses by permitting an increase in rates, and consequently there is non-action.

This illustrates in a small way the conditions which operated in this country as a whole with respect to the railroads. Unless there can be fundamental changes which will alter these conditions, there can be no reasonable and continuing assurance of an adequate return for capital.

One of the fundamentals is a standard of return so that the regulating body will have a definite statutory protection for any action taken on the subject. Whenever one gets to the point of prescribing a standard of return which should be realized, one has created a sort of a government guarantee. To my mind, the great problem is whether to have this guarantee certain or uncertain. Of course, the more certain the guarantee, the less initiative on the part of the management. On the other hand, while a less certain guarantee stimulates initiative, it is less promising to capital, and tends to defeat the ultimate objective—the attraction of adequate capital into the business.

The combination of these important factors is the thing to be accomplished. It is far from easy. It cannot be dealt with by a reproduction of the old conditions with a few palliating amendments. We have got to decide how definite we shall make the governmental assurance of an adequate return, and how we can accomplish this to a sufficient extent while preserving an adequate measure of private initiative.

#### SOME CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS

My own view is that a moderate guarantee on capital should be prescribed, so as to give a reasonable assurance to capital; and that there should be a right to participate in any profits made in excess of that guarantee, so as to furnish the needed stimulus to private initiative.

I further believe that the government should be strongly represented on the boards of directors, and that the government directors should constitute an important part of the regulating body which prescribes the rates, so that this regulating

body will know what necessities are developing and will be able to meet the needs of the situation much more nearly at the time when the needs arise than is possible at present.

I do not believe these fundamental changes can be successfully carried through except by the construction of a comparatively few great railroad corporations, each of which will so combine the more prosperous and the less prosperous roads as to present a fair average result, and to get away from the hopeless diversity of earnings which has existed in the past; and in each of which it will be practicable to have proper governmental representation.

The question as to the duration of the present Federal control of railroads leads me to say that I believe it is in the public interest that there should be an extension of control to January 1, 1924. I know of nothing which would more satisfactorily protect the railroad security-holders as well as the public than such an extension, which would be ample to cover not only the period of industrial readjustment, but also the period of legislative readjustment.

My personal view is that any legislation adopted in the next year or so is not likely to deal with the situation in the fundamental way which will be necessary in order to give adequate assurance to capital invested in the railroads. Indeed, there will be serious question whether any legislation will be adopted in the twenty-one-month period; the existing uncertainty as to what will happen will be continued. On the other hand, a five-year extension would greatly stabilize the situation. It would insure public service under the best conditions of public control, instead of under the worst conditions of public control. It would give an opportunity for the adoption of a permanent solution under conditions most favorable to perfectly fair consideration of every proposal. It would make it practicable to have the results of normal operations under government control—which, in my opinion, will not be practicable prior to March, 1921, when the results of the year 1920, as well as the results of the year 1919, will be available. It would relieve labor of the highly unfair inferences that are now drawn from the costs of railroad operation under government control, and it would provide an opportunity to give a fair test to the proper coordination of railroads and inland waterways.

# The New Congress and Its Leaders

MEN WHO HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO THE FRONT IN THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE BY THE POLITICAL OVERTURN THAT HAS GIVEN THE REPUBLICANS CONTROL OF BOTH BRANCHES OF THE SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS

By Judson C. Welliver

**W**HEN the Congress elected last November meets in special session and organizes—which may happen about the time when this magazine appears—the political center of gravity of both Houses will cross the center aisle. When the meeting of a new Congress involves a transfer of control from the hands of one political party to those of another, it is in the nature of political revolution. In the present case, there is something of the quality of double-gear revolution about it; for not only does the Republican party come back to succeed the Democrats in control, but it comes back very much changed since it was last in power.

The Republicans lost their majority in the House of Representatives in the election of 1910, and two years later control of the Senate was wrested from them. Thus the House has been in Democratic control for eight years, the Senate for six years.

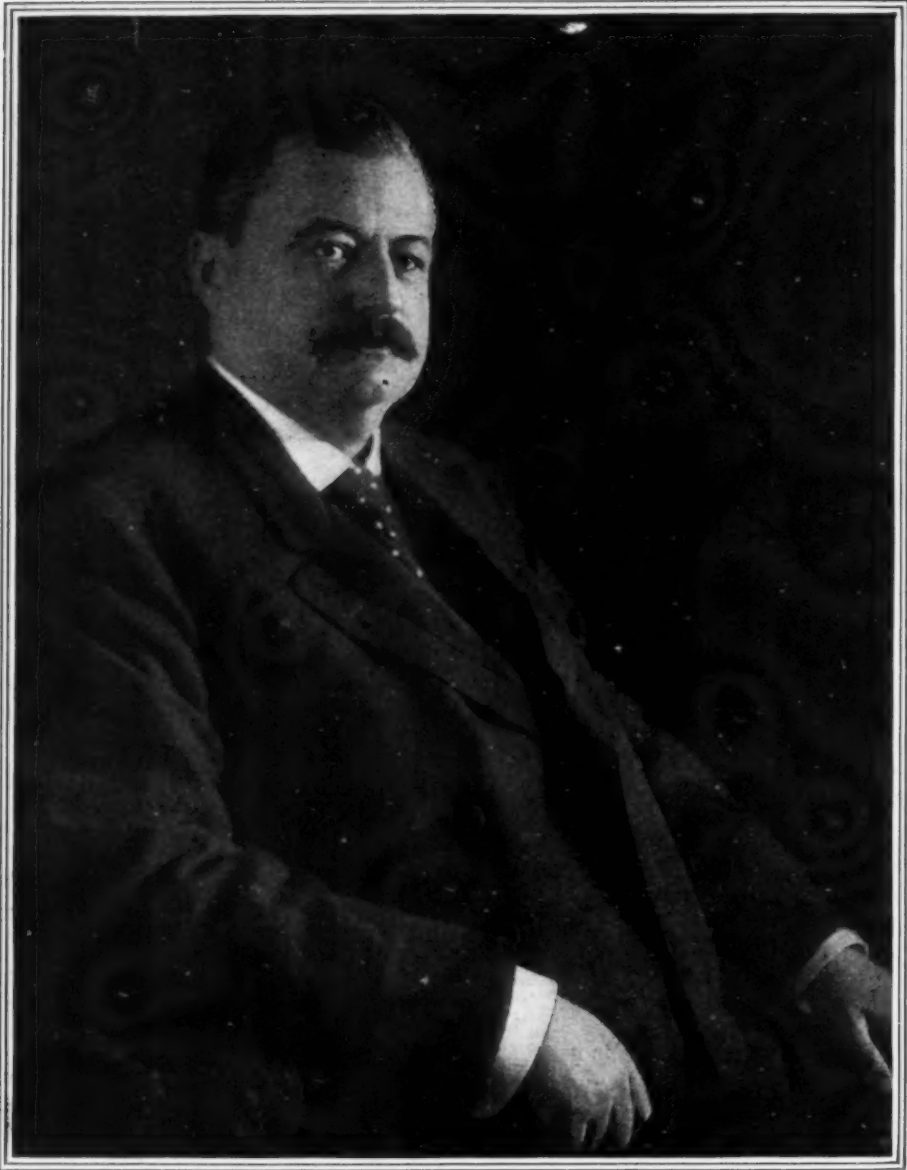
It is a fact not always appreciated, however, that during a considerable part of the life of the House of Representatives now retiring the Republicans were able to count a majority, or at least a plurality, of its members. At the beginning its party division was so close that the balance was held by a small group whose members bore such labels as Progressive, Independent, Socialist, and Prohibitionist. Later there was a period when, owing to vacancies on the Democratic side, some of them filled by Republicans at by-elections, the Republicans actually had it in their power to reorganize the House out of Democratic control, to elect their own Speaker, and to take charge of the machinery. But for the sub-

ordination of merely partizan interest to patriotic considerations related to the war, the thing might have been attempted. As a matter of fact, it was never seriously considered.

So long as the war lasted there was general agreement that partizanship must be set aside, and that the national interests would be served by leaving Congress politically in sympathy with the national administration. President Wilson, who had declared politics adjourned, called it back into extraordinarily active session when he issued his famous preelection appeal last autumn for the return of a Democratic Congress. The country didn't agree with his reasons for asking such support; the House went heavily Republican, and the Senate, to the astonishment of almost everybody, was also captured by the Republicans.

## THE SENATE IS CLOSELY DIVIDED

The "Congressional Directory," carefully labeling its compilation as "unofficial," calculates that in the new House there will be two hundred and thirty-eight Republicans, one hundred and ninety-three Democrats, two Independents, two Prohibitionists, and one Socialist. The Senate will have forty-nine Republicans and forty-seven Democrats. That is, the desertion of a single Republican would tie the latter body, giving the casting vote to Vice-President Marshall, a Democrat—a crisis which, in these days of independence, insurgency, and loose-hanging party harness, is liable to happen at almost any time. Indeed, much sympathy has been expressed



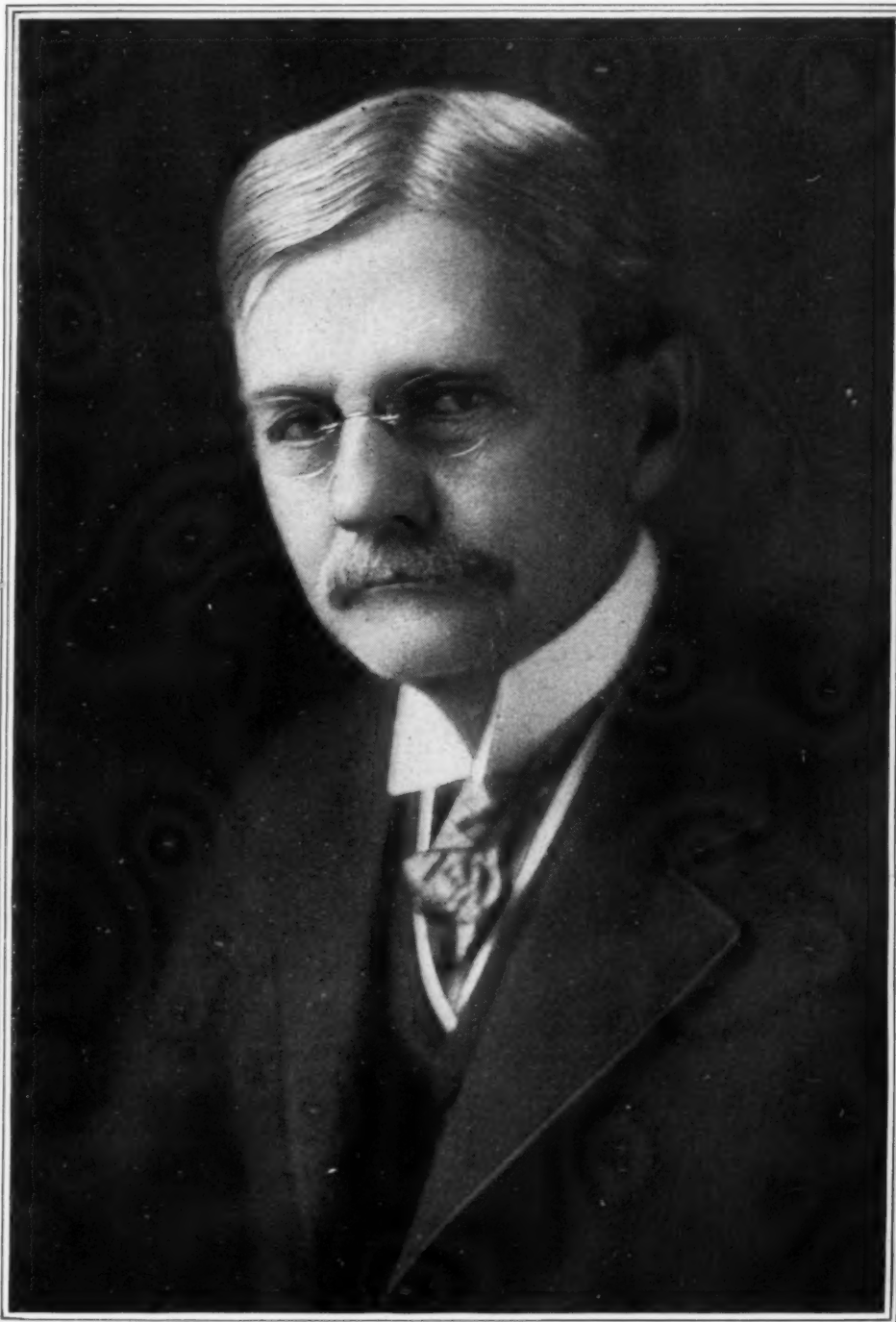
SENATOR BOIES PENROSE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

*From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington*

for Mr. Marshall, who has before him the cheerless prospect of being tied closely to his chair in the Senate chamber, where he will enjoy a quite unenvied opportunity to absorb the full sum of Senatorial wisdom on every topic from the league of nations to the problem of appropriating money to improve the navigability of Squeege Creek.

There may be some divergence of view as to the Senate's claim that it is the greatest deliberative body on earth; but among persons who have taken its proceedings allopathically, there is complete unanimity in the verdict that it is the most deliberative. To be Vice-President is bad enough, considering the low estimate placed on that



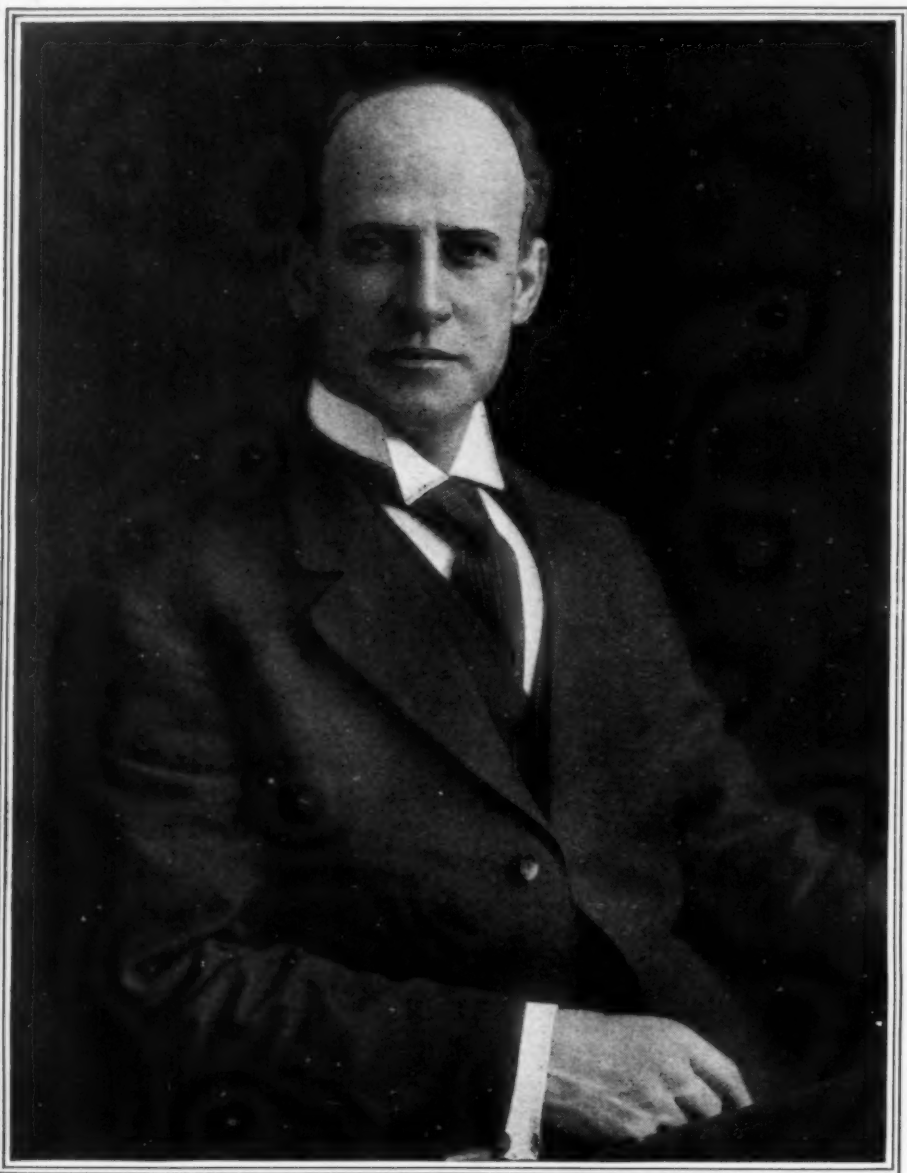


VICE-PRESIDENT THOMAS R. MARSHALL, OF INDIANA—WITH THE SENATE SO CLOSELY DIVIDED, MR. MARSHALL'S POSITION AS PRESIDING OFFICER MAY BE OF GREAT STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE, OWING TO THE POSSIBILITY OF HIS HAVING A CASTING VOTE

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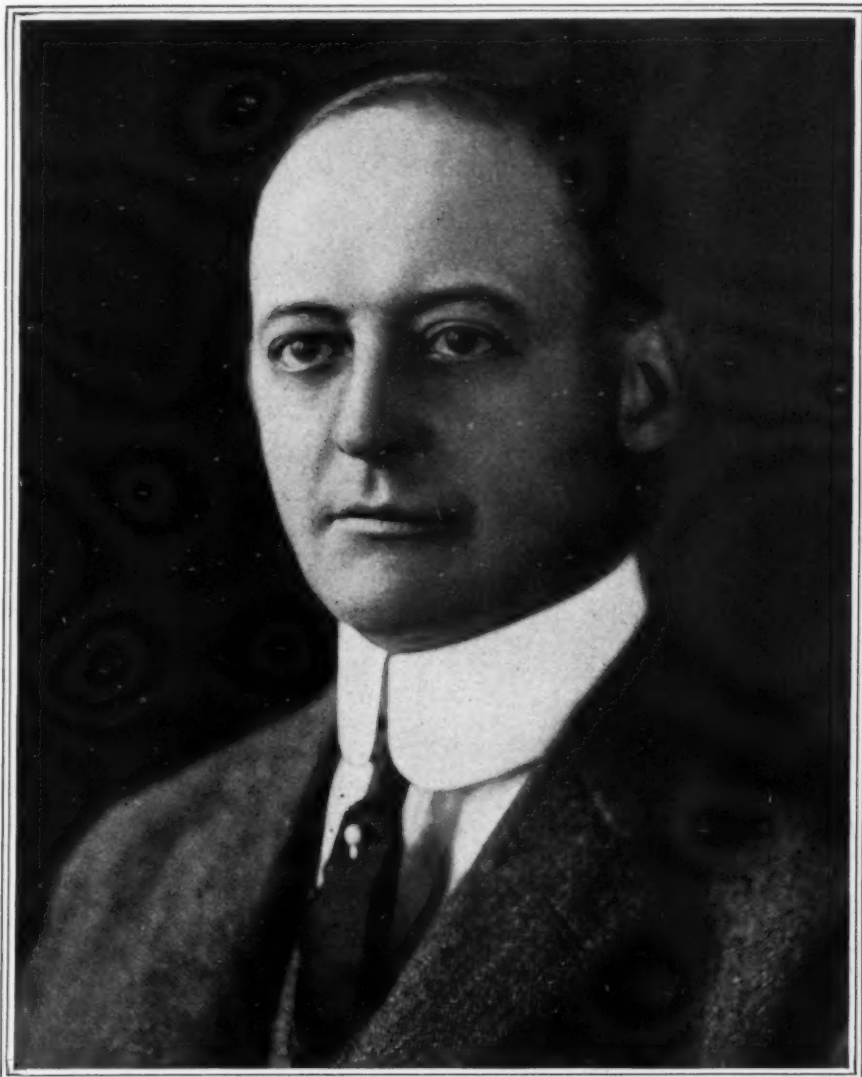
distinction, despite the fact that in recent years it has been held by three of the most popular men in public life — Roosevelt, Fairbanks, and Marshall. To be Vice-President with the necessity of sticking everlastingly on the job is a torture that seems to fall within the Constitutional inhibition against cruel and unusual punishments.

Step around to the nearest motion-picture show, and for five cents in the small towns, or ten cents in the more pretentious centers, you may see in the films the precise thing that takes place in Congressional life when one party turns over the reins of control to another — the “fade-out” of one group of leaders, the “fade-in” of another.



SENATOR MILES POINDEXTER, OF WASHINGTON, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS

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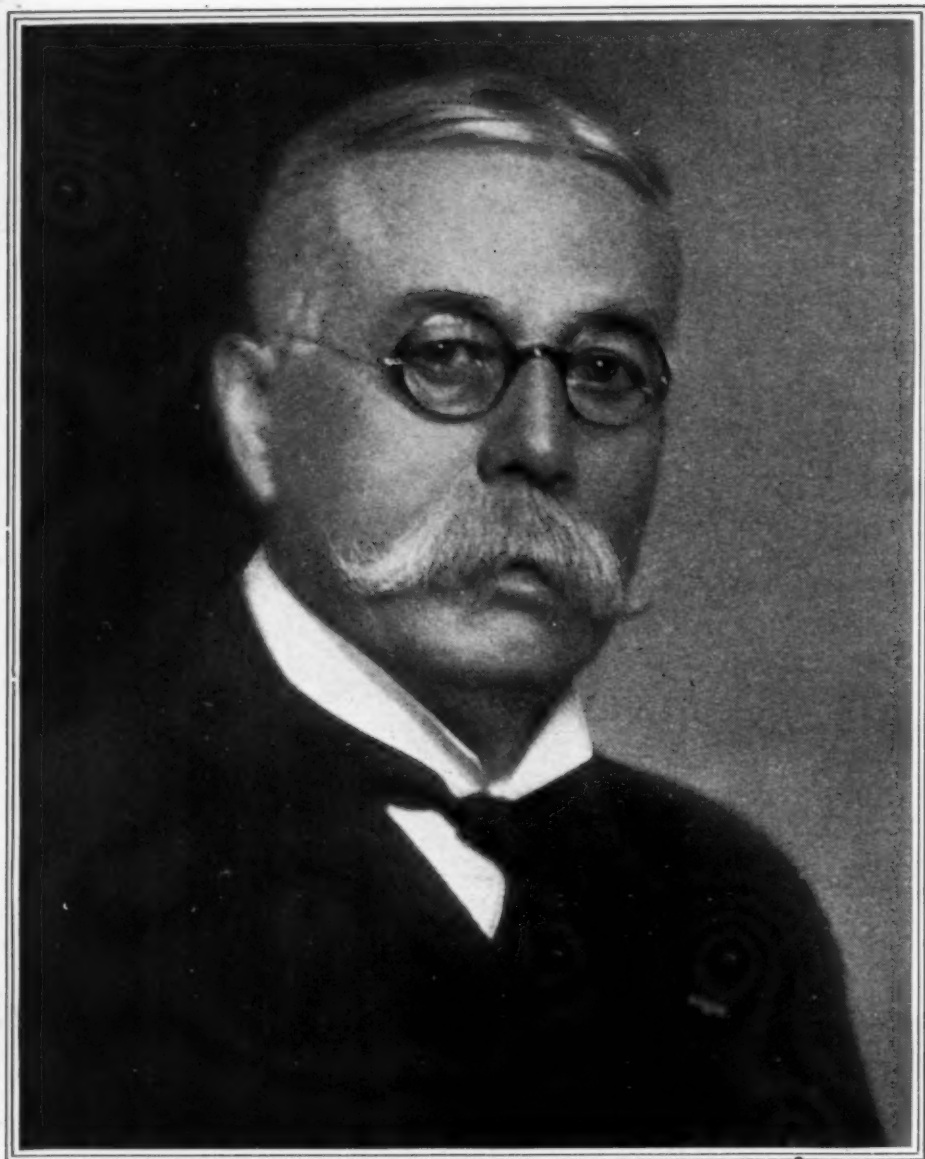
SENATOR JAMES W. WADSWORTH, JR., OF NEW YORK, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS

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Along with ships, and coal, and food, and Liberty bonds, and goodness knows what else, we have repeatedly been assured that the "movies" won the war for us. That may or may not be true, but it is certain that they provide an appropriate figure to illustrate my discourse at this juncture. We have come to a point in our seven-reel episodic drama of public life when one cast of heroes, villains, comedians, and lay-figures is dissolving out of our view, and an-

other company—only, for the moment, the new actors are all heroes—is being precipitated on the screen in all the revealing sharpness of a close-up introductory presentation.

The "ins" are becoming the "outs"; a long list of "has-beens" are resuming the insignia of the "isers"; "I knew him when—" will vie for popularity with "what has become of—" in every consideration of the personnel of public life. How



SENATOR FRANCIS E. WARREN, OF WYOMING, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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easy it would be to clean up in the betting on the next election, if only we might be privileged to thumb over the scenario of the two-year act now beginning!

#### A VICTORY FOR THE LIBERAL ELEMENT

If anybody suggests that politics—party, factional, or personal—is going to remain

in a state of passivity during the biennium now dawning, advise him to guess again. Politics is going to be splattered a foot thick all over the place. Already the Republicans have had a fine young row over the selection of their Speaker of the House, wherein Mr. Frederick H. Gillett, of Massachusetts, representing the more liberal





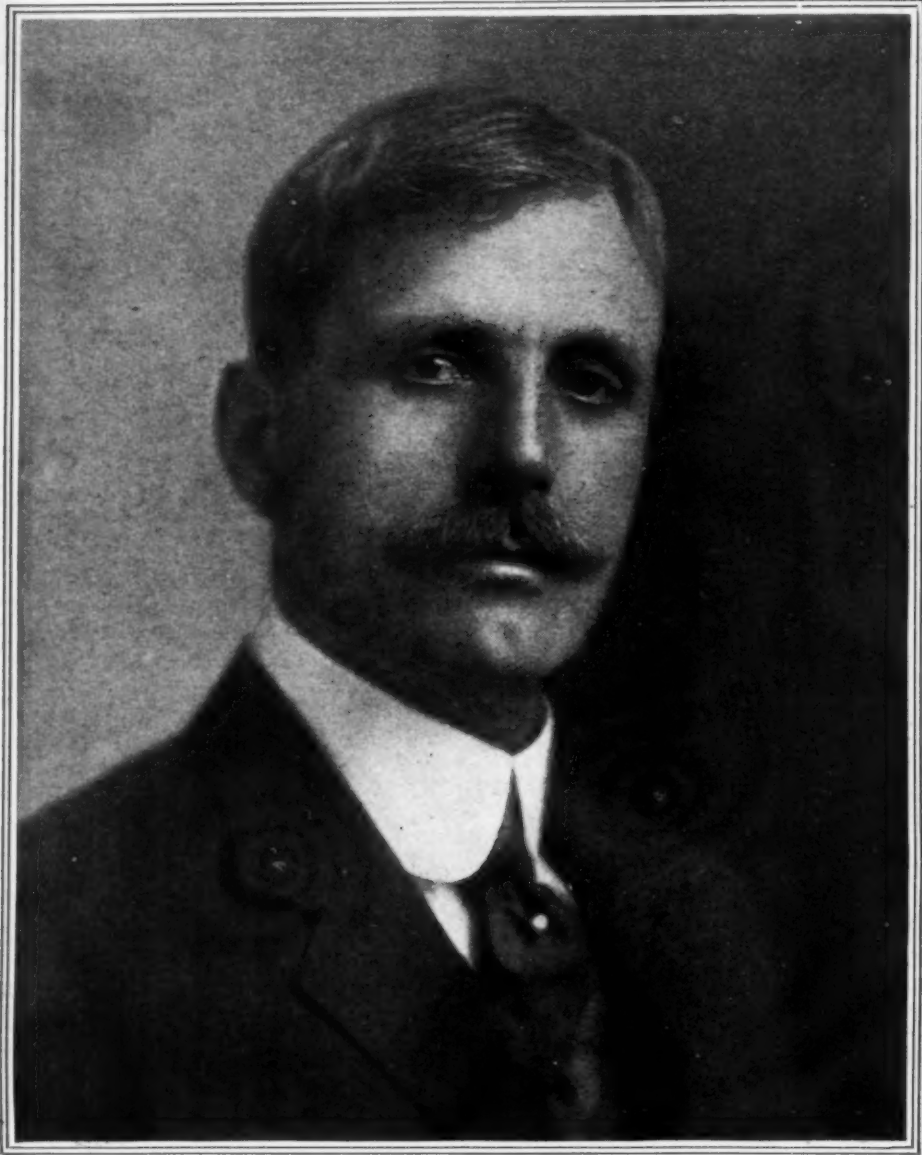
SENATOR WESLEY L. JONES, OF WASHINGTON, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

*From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington*

element of the party, ran away from James R. Mann, of Illinois, the pick of all the talent, to the tune of two to one in the caucus.

But while the Gillett cohorts were concentrating for the capture of the Speakership, the Mann forces deftly figured themselves into control of the committee on commit-

tees, which constructs the machine through which the House is operated. The same men who had united in unhorsing Mann on the charge that he was too conservative for these times, got together with impressive unanimity to preserve the committee organization that had grown up under the Mann régime. This was done through adoption



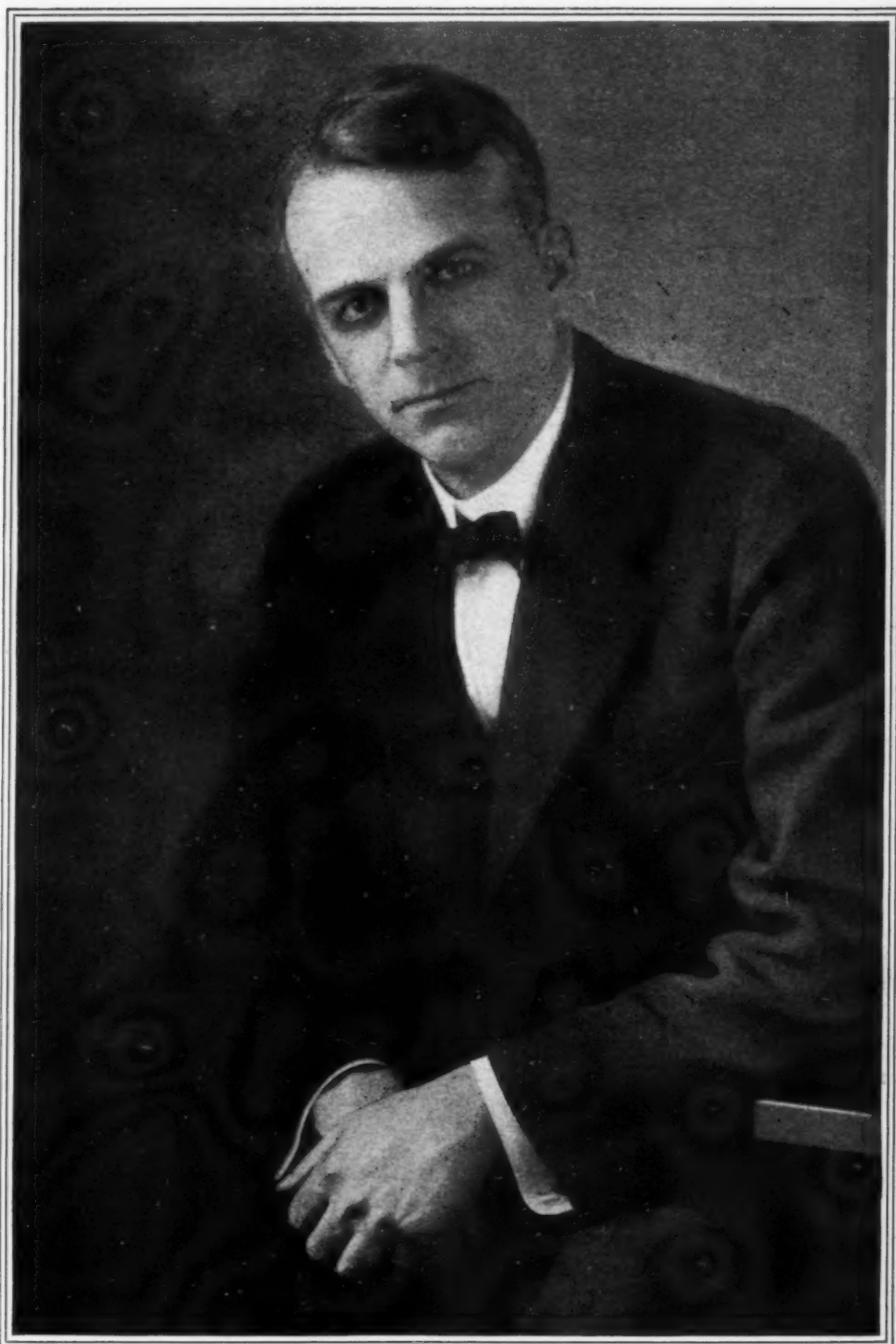
SENATOR GEORGE P. McLEAN, OF CONNECTICUT, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING AND CURRENCY

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of the seniority rule, the Republican minority of each committee being transferred bodily to the majority side and then expanded into a majority. The arrangement prevented endless heart-burnings, but it was a somewhat severe shock to the Gillett adherents.

The example of Republican insurgency

was not without its effect on the Democrats. Champ Clark, the veteran from Missouri, in the process of his descent from the Speakership to the leadership of the minority, was himself accused of reactionary tendencies, and a fitful effort was made to displace him in favor of some more progressive statesman. It was particularly alleged that Mr.

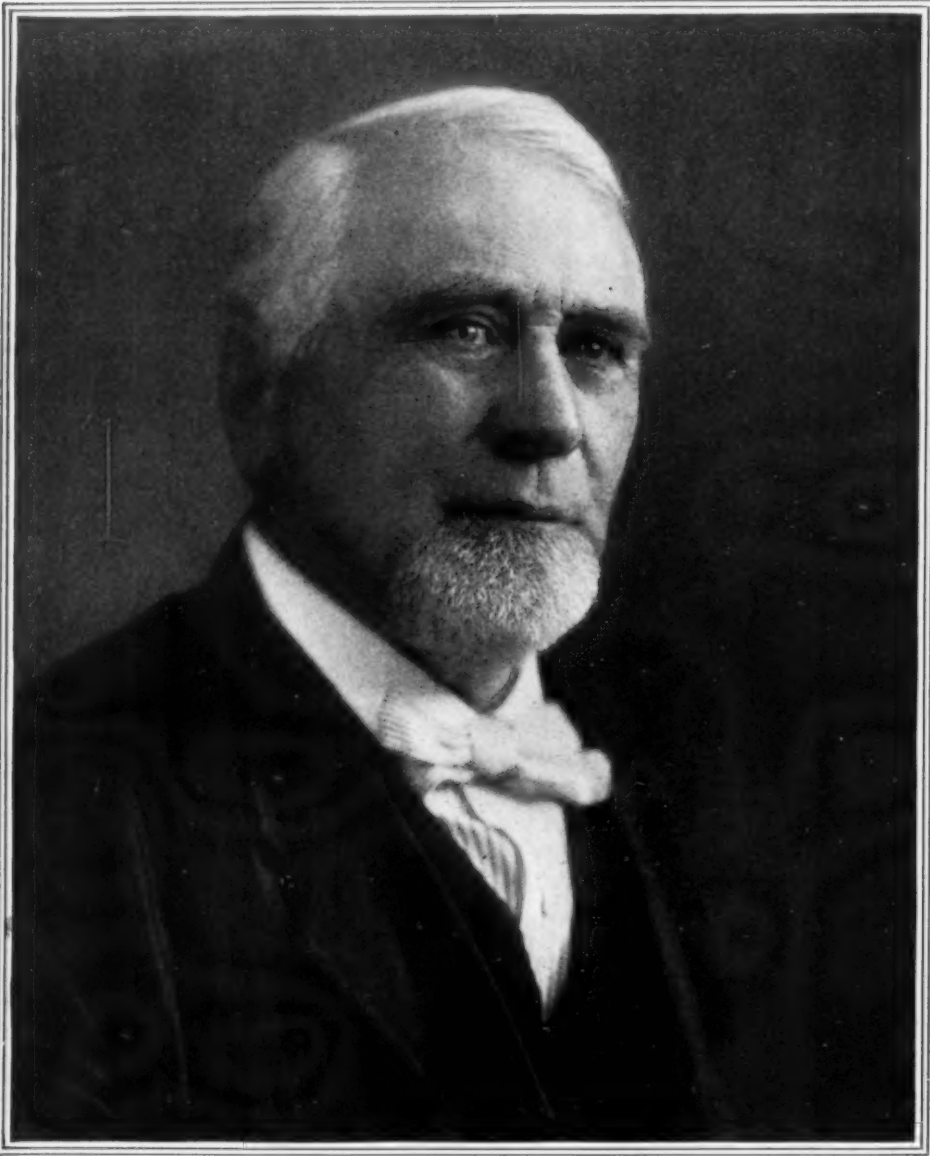


SENATOR WILLIAM S. KENYON, OF IOWA, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON INSULAR AFFAIRS

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Clark had not been so uniformly loyal to administration policies, especially war measures, as was desirable. However, after a

cloud of caucus-room tobacco-smoke. Mr. Clark will resume the rôle of Democratic leader which he played so successfully be-



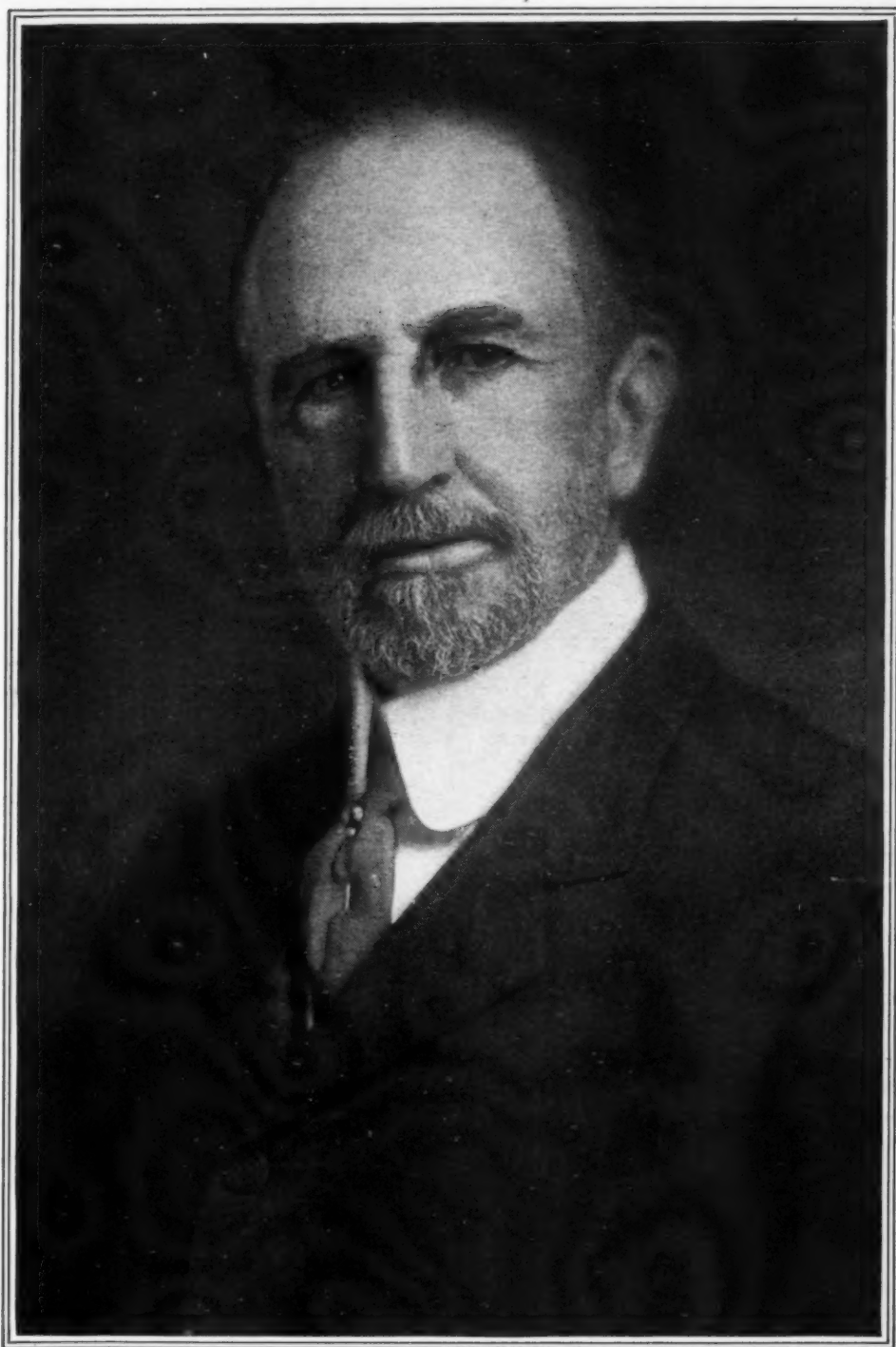
SENATOR KNUTE NELSON, OF MINNESOTA, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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period of hibernation and meditation, Mr. Clark gave signs of an acquiescent attitude toward the President's league of nations program, and the opposition dissolved in a

fore he was Speaker, while opposite him will appear a new star in the person of Frank W. Mondell, of Wyoming, as the Republican floor leader.





CONGRESSMAN FREDERICK H. GILLETT, OF MASSACHUSETTS, WHO WILL BE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE  
OF REPRESENTATIVES IN THE NEW CONGRESS

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Hedged in by latter-day restrictions on his power, the Speaker of the House is no longer the autocrat he once was. He divides pretty equitably with the floor leader of the majority party the eminence that formerly was his alone. The Republican machine has been constructed by the committee on committees, and to a considerable extent it will be run by the steering committee—these two bodies not being official committees of Congress, but party instruments. The Speaker has become a sort of moderator, as it were. Instead of definite and almost dictatorial powers, he has such general influence as his personality and abilities may command. In the case of Mr. Gillett, however, his recent experience as leader *pro tempore* warrants the expectation that he will be a real force in the House.

#### THE SPEAKER AND THE FLOOR LEADER

A glance at the two men who will head the Republican organization suggests the interesting possibilities of American public life. Mr. Gillett, a Massachusetts silk-stocking, product of Amherst and Harvard, was elected Speaker by the more radical forces. Mr. Mondell represents a totally different genesis. Born in St. Louis, left an orphan at five years, he became the ward of a Congregational minister serving a scattered flock on the bleak prairies of north-western Iowa in the early days. He helped the family to eke out a limited existence, went to school for a few months in winter, and learned to read endlessly in the small but excellent collection of books that his patron possessed. He went to the mountain West as a very young man, engaged in mining and stock-raising, came to Congress from Wyoming in 1895, and, except one term, has been there since.

To edge more sharply the contrast between these two careers, it may be added that while the Massachusetts silk-stocking, in the accepted political grouping, represents the success of radicalism, the orphan boy from the prairies stands for the most conservative element in the party.

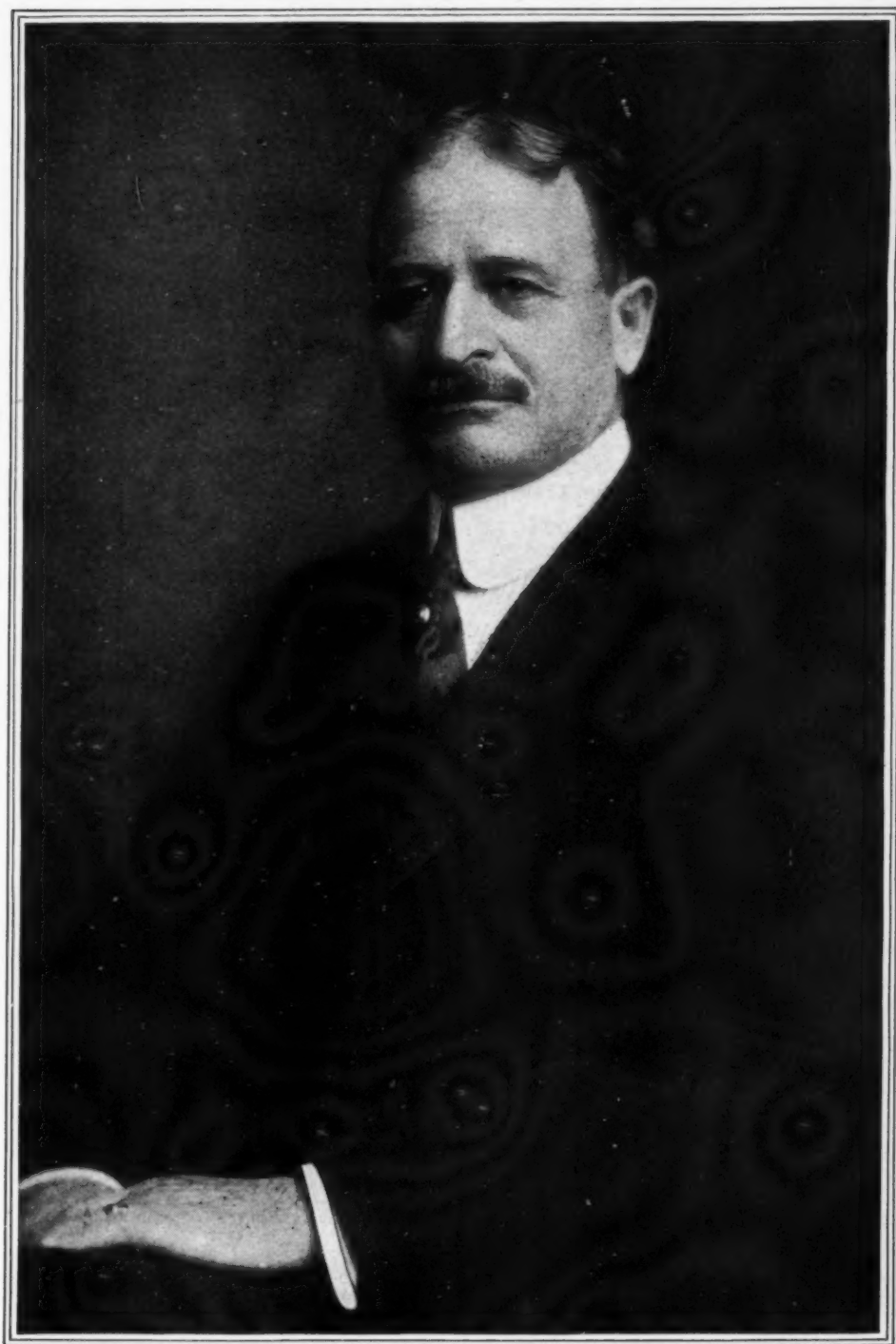
Mechanism for controlling House business has been in evolution ever since the powers of the Speaker were shorn in 1910. In the Congress that has just expired—the War Congress—the Republicans provided themselves a steering committee of five, with the floor leader as *ex-officio* chairman. A similar plan is continued for the new Congress, with a committee comprising the

leader as chairman, and Messrs. Martin B. Madden, of Illinois; J. Hampton Moore, of Pennsylvania; Thomas B. Dunn, of New York; Samuel E. Winslow, of Massachusetts; and Nicholas Longworth, of Ohio. A motion is pending in caucus, at the time of writing, to add four others to this committee, in order, as is claimed, to make it more representative of all party elements and of different sections of the country. Should the proposal carry, it would add Messrs. John I. Nolan, of California; C. Frank Reavis, of Nebraska; Sidney Anderson, of Minnesota; and Campbell Bascom Slemp, of Virginia.

Just what will be the work of the steering committee in the coming sessions it is hard to predict. Larger questions of policy must be determined in the caucus of all Republicans; the committees are made by the special committee for that purpose; the Rules Committee determines what subjects, and in what order, shall be dealt with in the process of legislation. The steering committee seems likely to have chiefly executive functions, though the plan of expanding it to ten is based on the assumption that it will possess a considerable degree of policy-making authority.

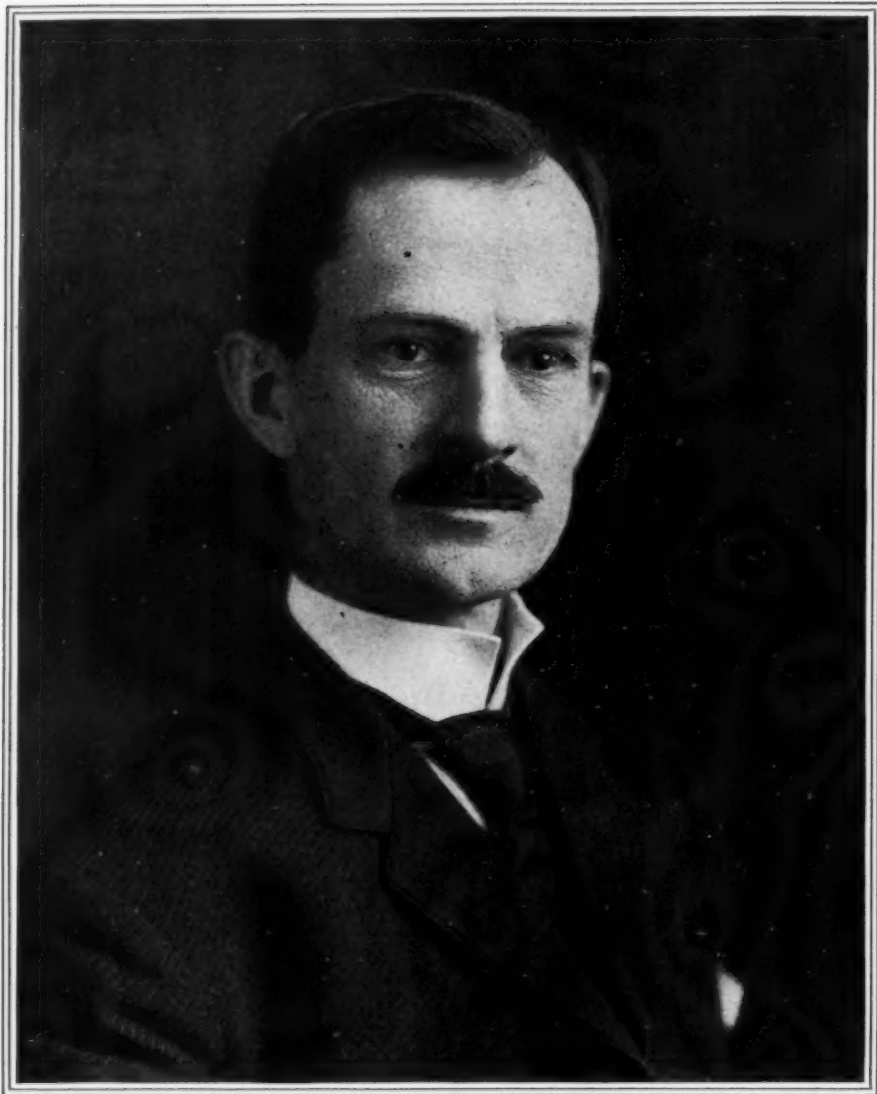
The reorganization of the Senate cannot be outlined so confidently, at this time, as of the House. With their control so uncertain that a change of one vote would destroy it, the Senate Republicans confront a difficult problem.

By seniority of service Mr. Penrose, of Pennsylvania, is entitled to be chairman of the Finance Committee, easily the most important in the Senate; but Mr. Borah, of Idaho, is understood to have declared that Penrose shall not have that position. It is claimed that a handful of other Republicans support Borah. If they stand by their guns, they can prevent adoption of the committee list that will be made up of the two committees on committees. A Democratic committee prepares the list for the Democratic side, a Republican committee for the Republican side, and the consolidated report is adopted by the Senate. With the possibility that a single recalcitrant Republican might kick over the whole kettle of fish, and with Mr. Borah very recalcitrant, and not entirely alone in it, the potentialities are decidedly mixed. However, the political stake is so great that it is hardly to be supposed that the Republicans will permit control to be wrested from them.



CONGRESSMAN FRANK W. MONDELL, OF WYOMING, WHO WILL BE FLOOR LEADER OF THE REPUBLICAN MAJORITY IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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CONGRESSMAN J. HAMPTON MOORE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, A MEMBER OF THE REPUBLICAN STEERING COMMITTEE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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The spot-light of legislative importance will seek out a good many men who have been standing modestly in the wings, but who knew its radiance in other times, before the Republican eclipse of 1910 and 1912. The new Congress will face a set of questions very different from those of the War Congress, but just as distinctive. There will be problems of demobilization, instead of mobilization; of decentralization, instead of centralization; of putting ice on a brow

fevered by the reaction from war-time exhilaration.

#### THE WORK BEFORE THE NEW CONGRESS

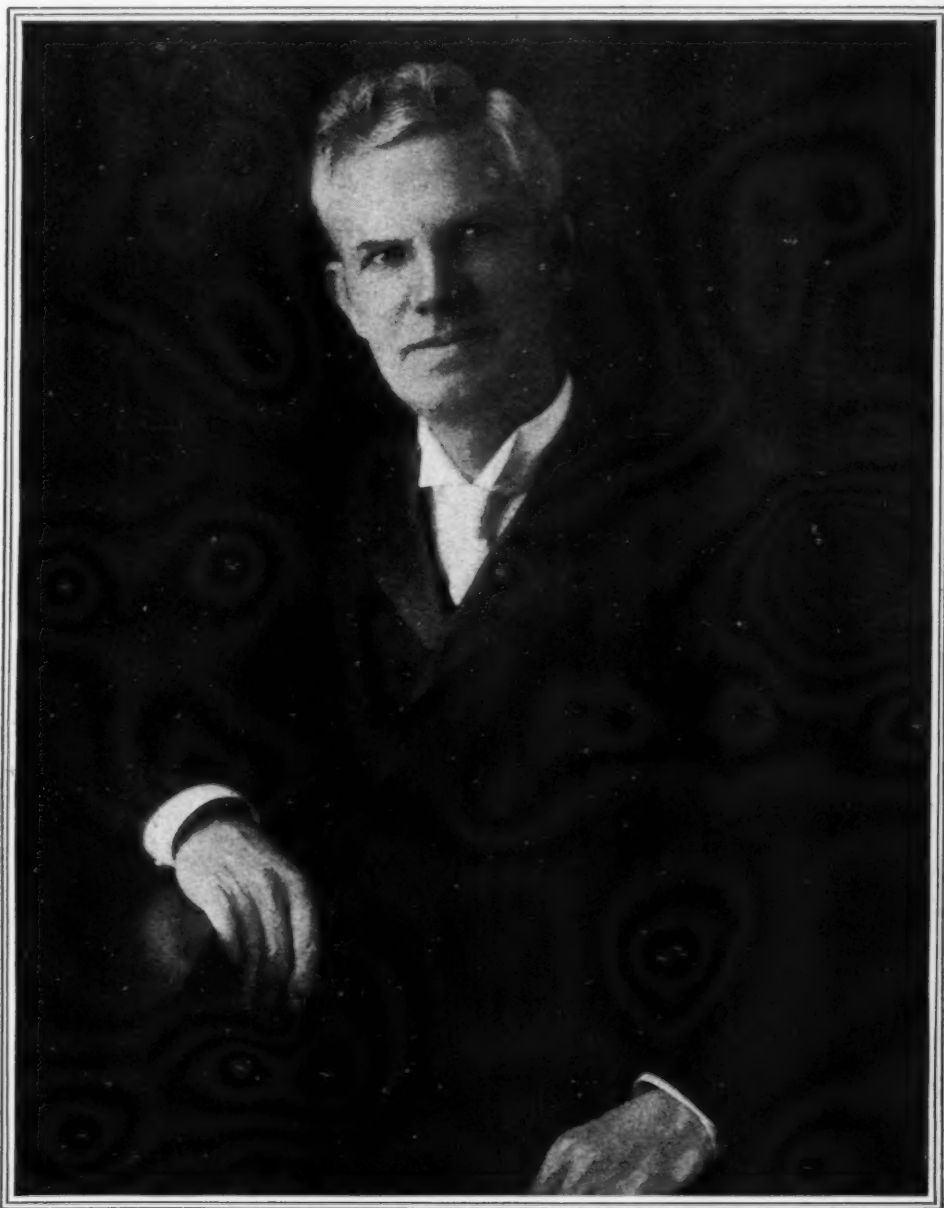
The army must be disintegrated, and a new military establishment must be provided on a peace basis. In that task the Military Committees will lead; the House committee being headed by Julius Kahn, of California, the Senate probably by James W. Wadsworth, Jr., of New York. Both,



though then in the minority, did highly important work in framing the war program, and are deeply interested in and familiar with the business.

During the war these committees broke away from partizanship. Mr. Kahn took charge of measures which the Democratic

chairman, Mr. Dent, did not approve; and in the Senate a group of independent Democrats—Chamberlain, of Oregon; Hitchcock, of Nebraska; Thomas, of Colorado; Reed, of Missouri; and Smith, of Georgia—repeatedly united with Republicans in opposing policies of the administration.



CONGRESSMAN MARTIN B. MADDEN, OF ILLINOIS, A MEMBER OF THE REPUBLICAN STEERING COMMITTEE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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The Naval Affairs Committee will probably be headed, in the Senate, by Poin-  
dexter, of Washington; in the House Thom-  
as S. Butler, of Pennsylvania, has been  
designated as chairman. Immediate pro-  
vision must be made for our army and our  
navy, because the appropriation bills that

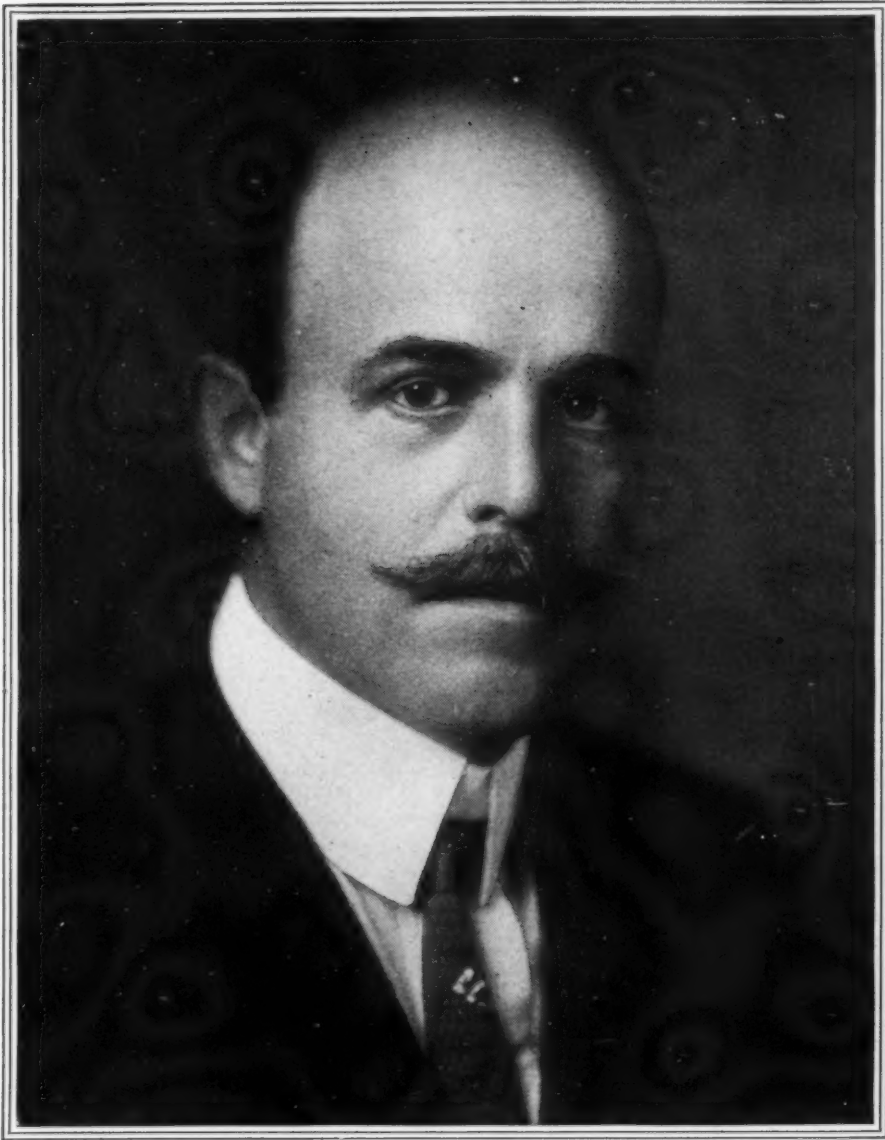
should have passed the last Congress failed.  
Beyond that, large future policies and pro-  
grams demand consideration.

Ways and Means is traditionally the fore-  
most House committee, wherein revenue  
legislation originates, including tariff bills,  
for generations laden with political fate. It



CONGRESSMAN SAMUEL E. WINSLOW, OF MASSACHUSETTS, A MEMBER OF THE REPUBLICAN STEERING  
COMMITTEE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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CONGRESSMAN NICHOLAS LONGWORTH, OF OHIO, A MEMBER OF THE REPUBLICAN STEERING COMMITTEE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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will have as chairman Joseph W. Fordney, of Michigan, but will probably be of secondary importance for a time because of the impossibility of sweeping tariff legislation in a Republican Congress while a Democratic President sits at the White House with the veto ax firmly in hand. Whatever tariff measures are undertaken will relate to the unpartizan but insistent

problem of revenue, with incidental consideration for industries which, because of peculiar conditions arising out of the war, may be esteemed to need special attention. The preservation of new industries, typified by dyestuffs, and the prevention of indiscriminate "dumping" of foreign products, will command chief interest and, it is hoped, inspire least political antagonism.



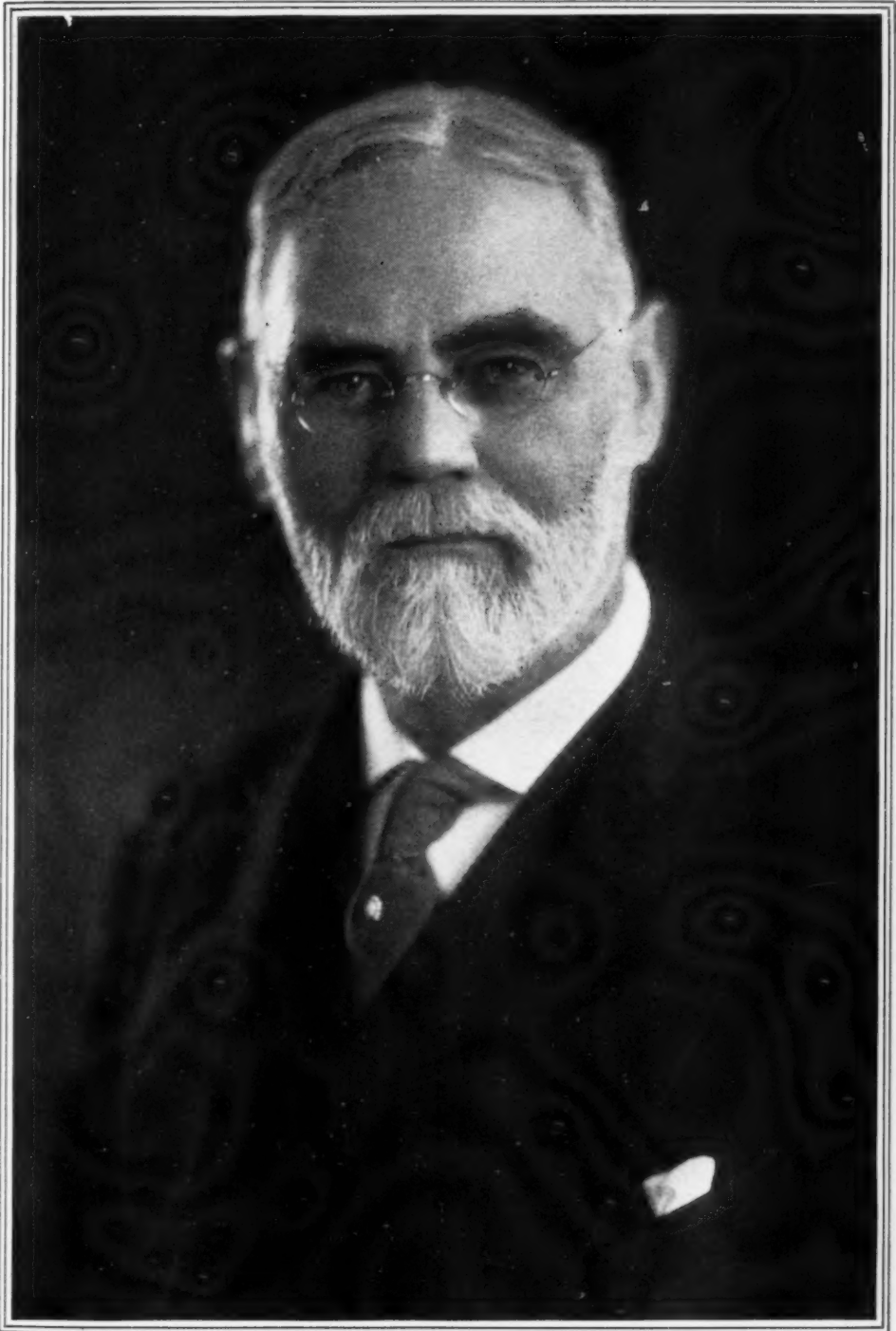
CONGRESSMAN JOHN J. ESCH, OF WISCONSIN, WHO WILL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE COMMERCE

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The inspiration of war moved the country to giant efforts, through buying and building, to provide a merchant marine that is now second only to Great Britain's. A permanent national policy toward shipping must be formulated. That will fall to the

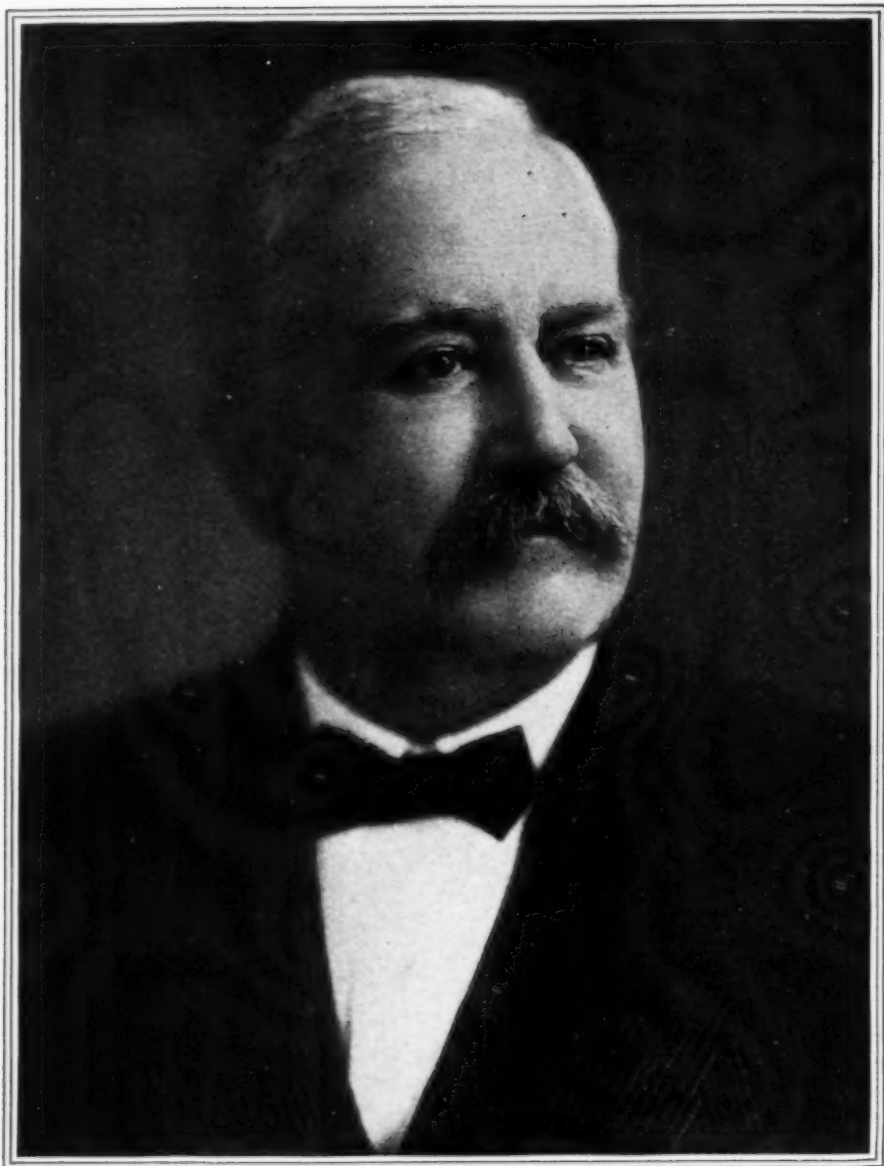
Senate Committee on Commerce, probably with Senator Jones, of Washington, as chairman, and to the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, with William S. Greene, of Massachusetts, at its head.





CONGRESSMAN JAMES R. MANN, OF ILLINOIS, A LEADING FIGURE AMONG THE HOUSE REPUBLICANS,  
AND CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE

*From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington*



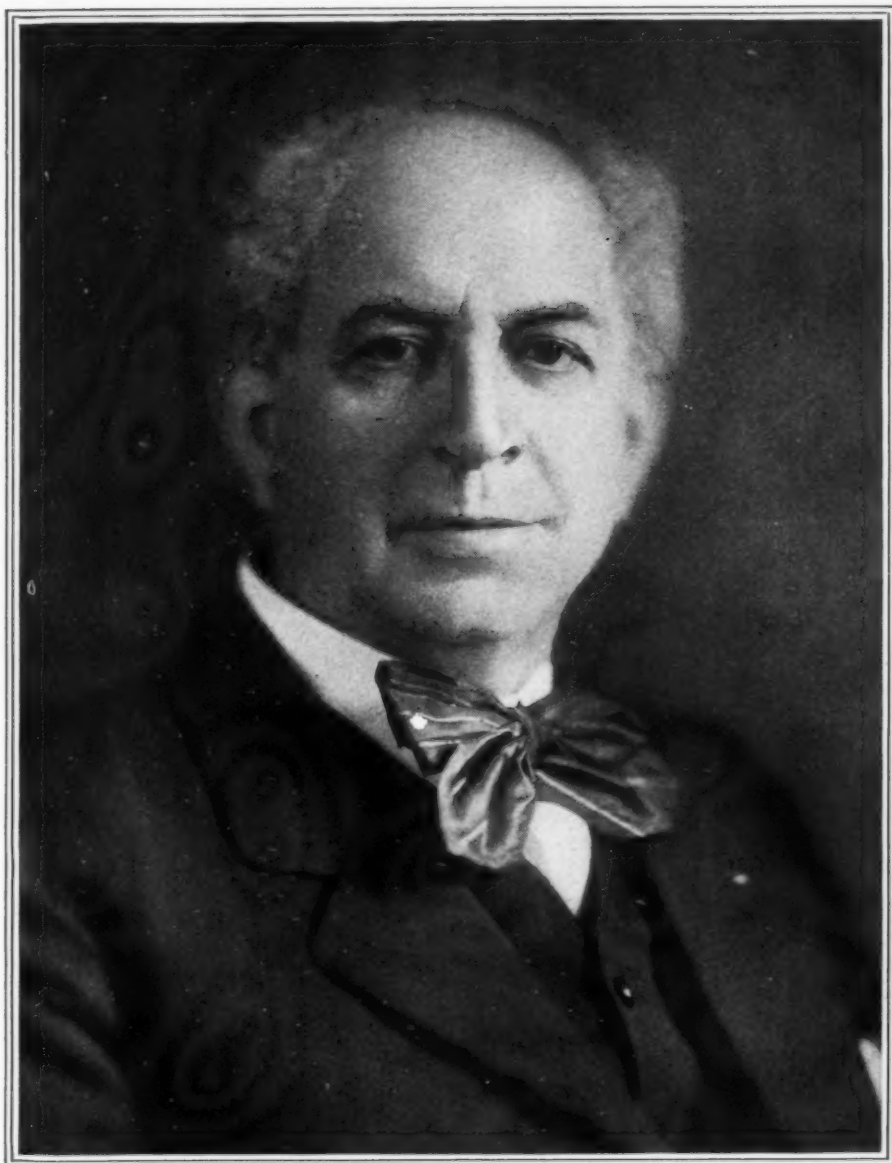
CONGRESSMAN JOSEPH W. FORDNEY, OF MICHIGAN, WHO WILL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

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Having taken over, as a war measure, the railroads, telegraphs, and telephones, the government must now decide what to do about their future; and this is going to be one of the hardest nuts the new Congress will have to crack; in point of public interest and financial concern, perhaps the biggest of all. It falls to the Interstate

Commerce Committee, John J. Esch, of Wisconsin, being chairman of the House committee and Albert B. Cummins, of Iowa, of the Senatorial body. Both are veterans at this game, having played large parts in framing the railroad-regulation laws from 1906 down to date.

Cutting the garment of national expen-

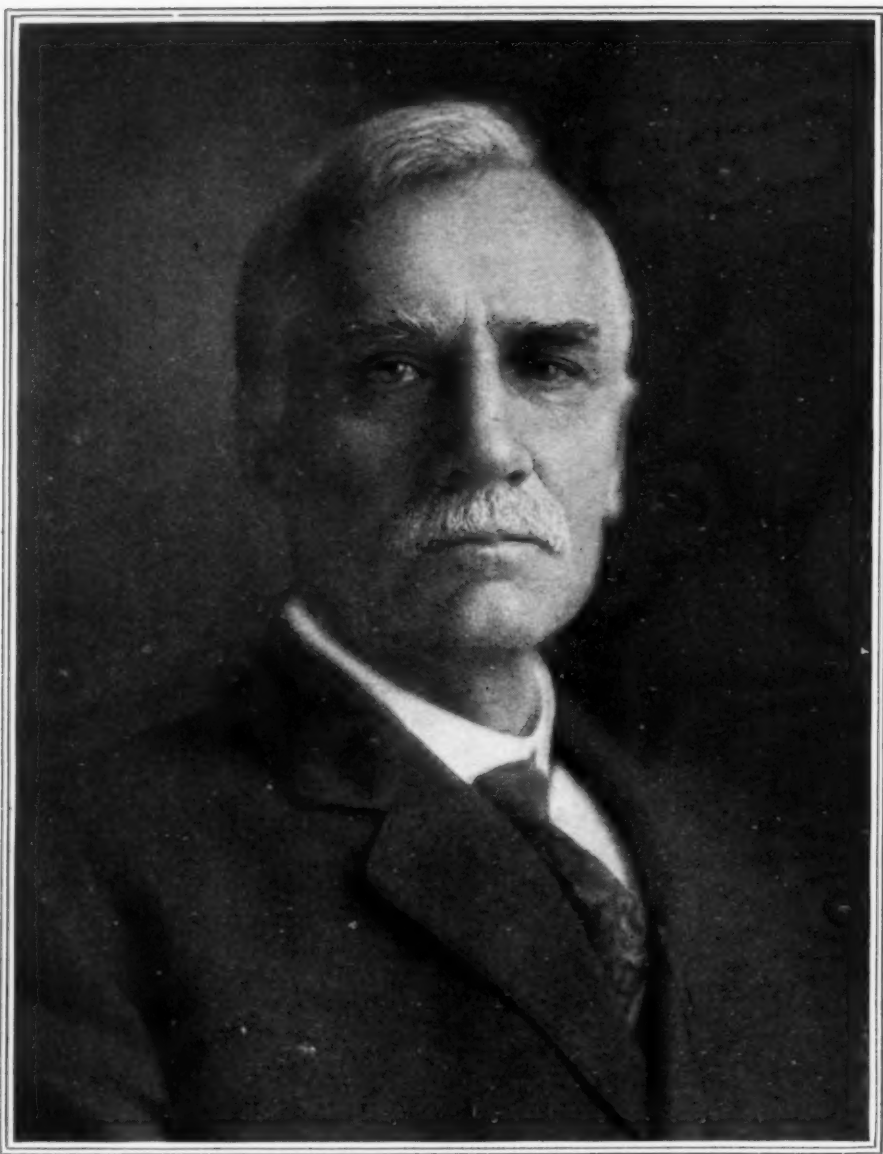


CONGRESSMAN JULIUS KAHN, OF CALIFORNIA, WHO WILL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS

*From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington*

diture to the cloth of national revenue is largely, though not entirely, the task of the Appropriation Committees—a task, this time, for watch-dogs and experts in the mechanism of legislative burglar-alarms. Broad lines of policy laid down in these committees will, it is hoped, dominate the preparation of appropriation measures which

will come from other committees possessing the spending authority. Nothing is so hard as to resist the demand for appropriations, and in the coming sessions no man with a taste for log-rolling or a distaste for making enemies should seek place on an appropriation committee. There is afoot a movement for the adoption of a budget plan, the



CONGRESSMAN THOMAS S. BUTLER, OF PENNSYLVANIA, WHO WILL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS

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better to control the disbursements of Uncle Sam's billions. Long recognized as a most desirable reform, it has become a greater need than ever at this time, when billions are dealt with as nonchalantly as millions used to be.

Congressman James W. Good, of Iowa—a young man whose service has not been long, but who through the swift mutations

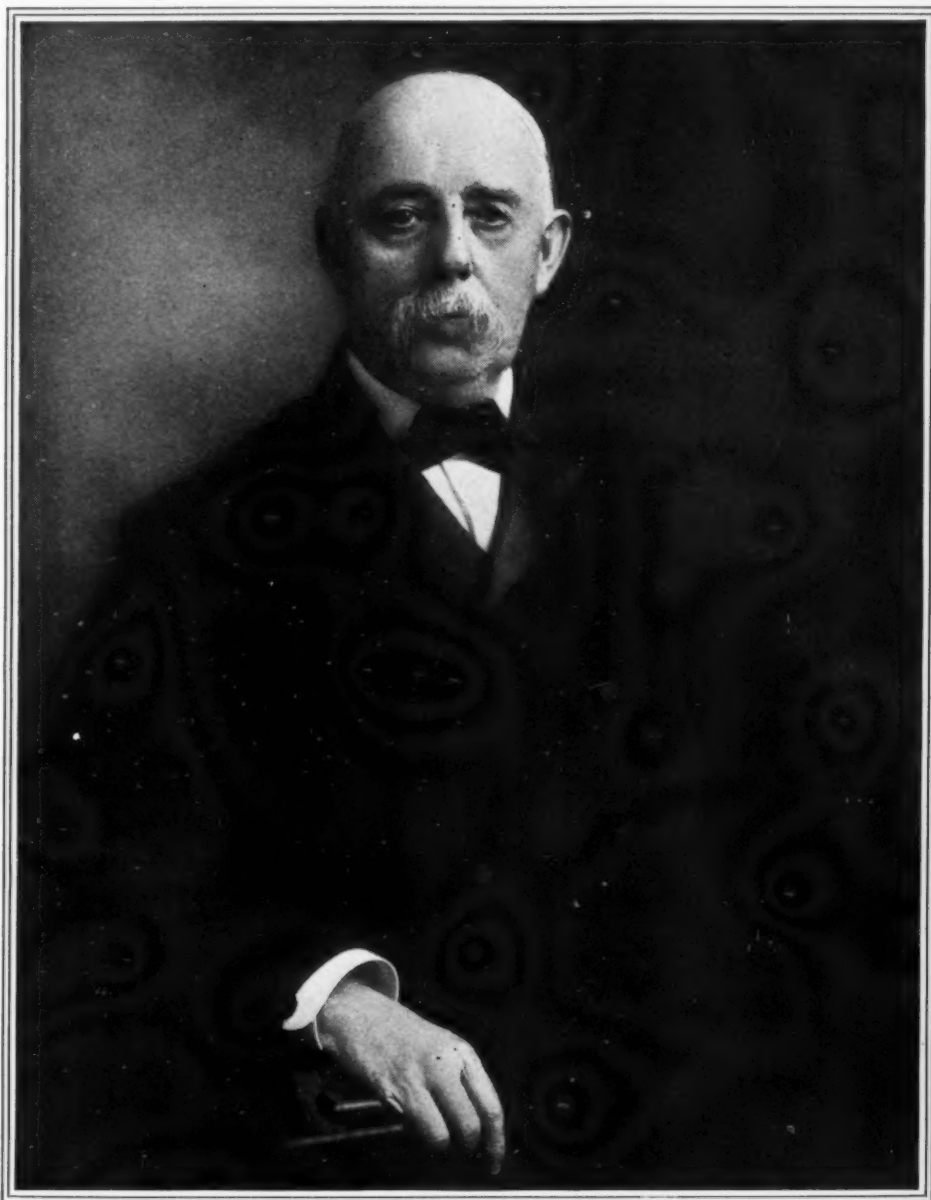
of political life and his own demonstrated capacity has come to headship of the House Appropriations Committee—is working out a plan whereby it is hoped to fit a budget into our Congressional system as an efficient part of the mechanics. Not an easy task, as students have discovered when they tried to adapt the budget plans of other countries to our peculiar methods. The budget idea



fits easily enough into the scheme of either an autocracy or a government based on parliamentary responsibility. To adjust it to our parliamentary system requires, first, legislation compelling the executive departments to present their demands in the form of a unified budget; and, then, changes of

the rules in both House and Senate to facilitate the handling of the budget through legislative manipulation.

Economy and efficiency must mark the appropriation work for many years to come; and Mr. Good, Senator Smoot, and other experts have served unqualified notice that



CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM S. GREENE, OF MASSACHUSETTS, WHO WILL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES

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no dollar will be appropriated without proof of absolute necessity. Senator Warren, of Wyoming, will probably be at the head of the Senate's Committee on Appropriations.

#### THE SENATE AND THE PEACE TREATY

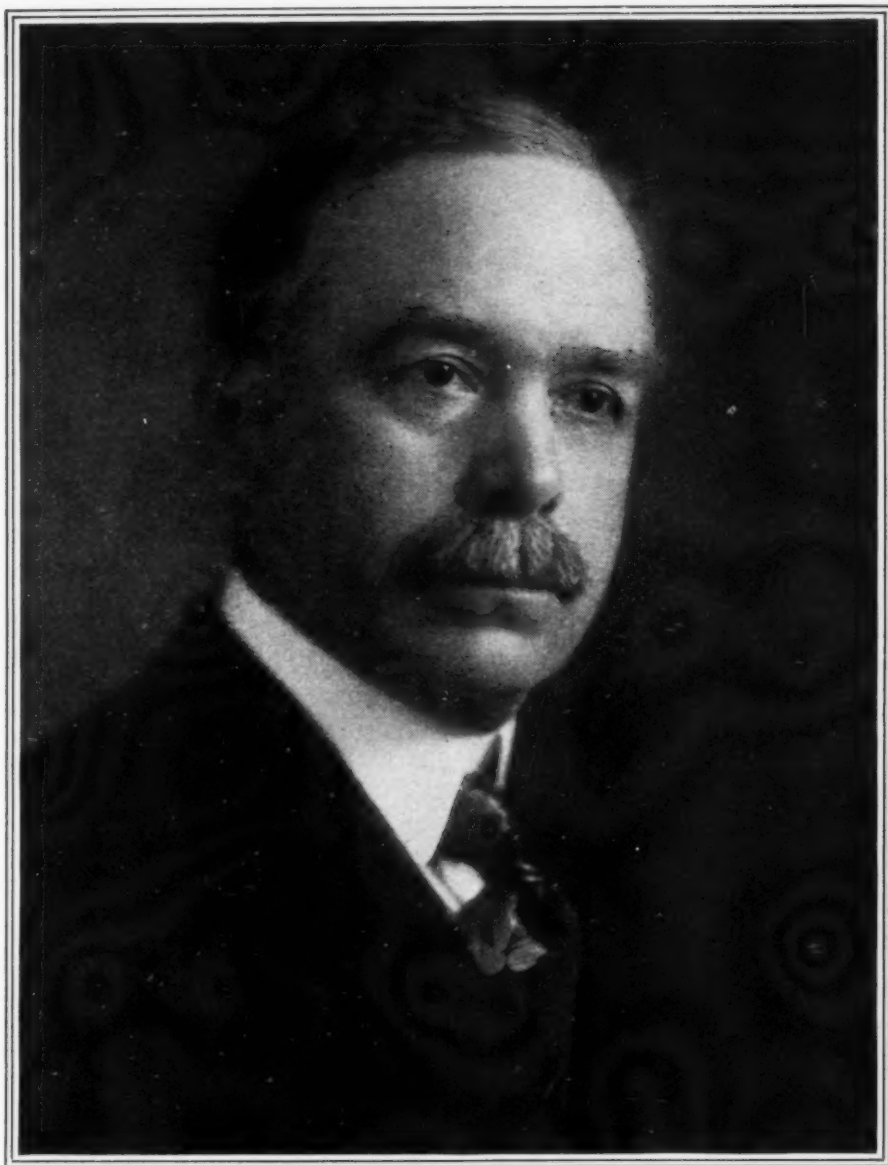
Berated and bedeviled much and often as it is, the rule of committee assignment ac-

cording to seniority of service brings some most fitting results; and among these is the designation of Mr. Lodge, of Massachusetts, to be chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and Republican floor leader. By common consent Mr. Lodge is regarded as the most accomplished authority the Senate boasts in the realm of inter-



CONGRESSMAN ALBERT JOHNSON, OF WASHINGTON, WHO WILL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

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CONGRESSMAN JAMES W. GOOD, OF IOWA, WHO WILL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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national affairs. What with the pendency of the peace treaty and the covenant for a league of nations, his committee was never more important than now. Its members will lead the great debate on these issues; wherein large parts will be played by Senators Lodge, Borah, Brandegee, and Knox on the Republican side, and by Senators

Hitchcock, Williams, Pittman, and Thomas on the Democratic.

It will by no means be a battle on strict party lines. We shall hear the eloquent and vitriolic Reed, though a Democrat, oppose the administration program, and he may have influential support from the Democratic side; while Senator McCum-



CONGRESSMAN EDMUND PLATT, OF NEW YORK, WHO WILL BE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON BANKING AND CURRENCY

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ber, a Republican, and a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations, has already spoken out strongly for the Wilson plan, and some other Republicans are expected to line up with him.

One of the earliest accomplishments of the new Congress is likely to be the adop-

tion of the resolution submitting to the States a Constitutional amendment giving votes to women. It failed in the Senate, after passing the House, of the last Congress. Mr. Mann, of Illinois, probably the greatest parliamentary expert in either branch, has taken the chairmanship of the



House Committee on Woman Suffrage in order to handle this measure.

Other business of great but secondary importance will concern the problems of education and labor; of immigration and naturalization; of agricultural production and readjustment in view of the efforts required during the war to make up a world's food deficit; of our insular possessions, in view of the probable effort to reorganize the relations of the Philippines to this country; of irrigation and reclamation; of road-building, public lands, water-power development, and many others.

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, whose head will be Mr. Page, of Vermont, has been struggling to find a plan for regulating the great meat-packers without reducing the efficiency of their service. In dealing with the manifold problems of food-production, this committee will have as its opposite number the House Committee on Agriculture, headed by Mr. Haugen, of Iowa.

The Insular Affairs Committee in the House will be led by Horace M. Towner, of Iowa, who is also chairman of the House Republican caucus; the corresponding committee in the Senate, that on the Philippines, will probably have as its chairman Mr. Kenyon, of Iowa.

Immigration Committees will be headed in the House by Albert Johnson, of Washington, and in the Senate probably by Mr. Colt, of Rhode Island. Whether immigration shall be sharply restricted for a period of years is a question that will demand attention.

Senator McLean, of Connecticut, is entitled to the chairmanship of the Banking and Currency Committee in the upper house, and his *vis-à-vis* at the head of the House committee on the same subject will be Edmund Platt, of New York.

The Education Committees have achieved a new importance because of the necessity for educational reforms which has become apparent as result of experience in creating a great army by conscription. Simeon D. Fess, of Ohio, who was a college professor before he became a skilful politician and a most useful member of Congress, is head of the House Education Committee; who will lead the corresponding committee in the Senate is not yet certain. Mr. Borah will have it if he chooses. The great judiciary committees will be headed in the House by Andrew J. Volstead, of Minnesota, and in the Senate probably by Mr. Nelson, of the same State.

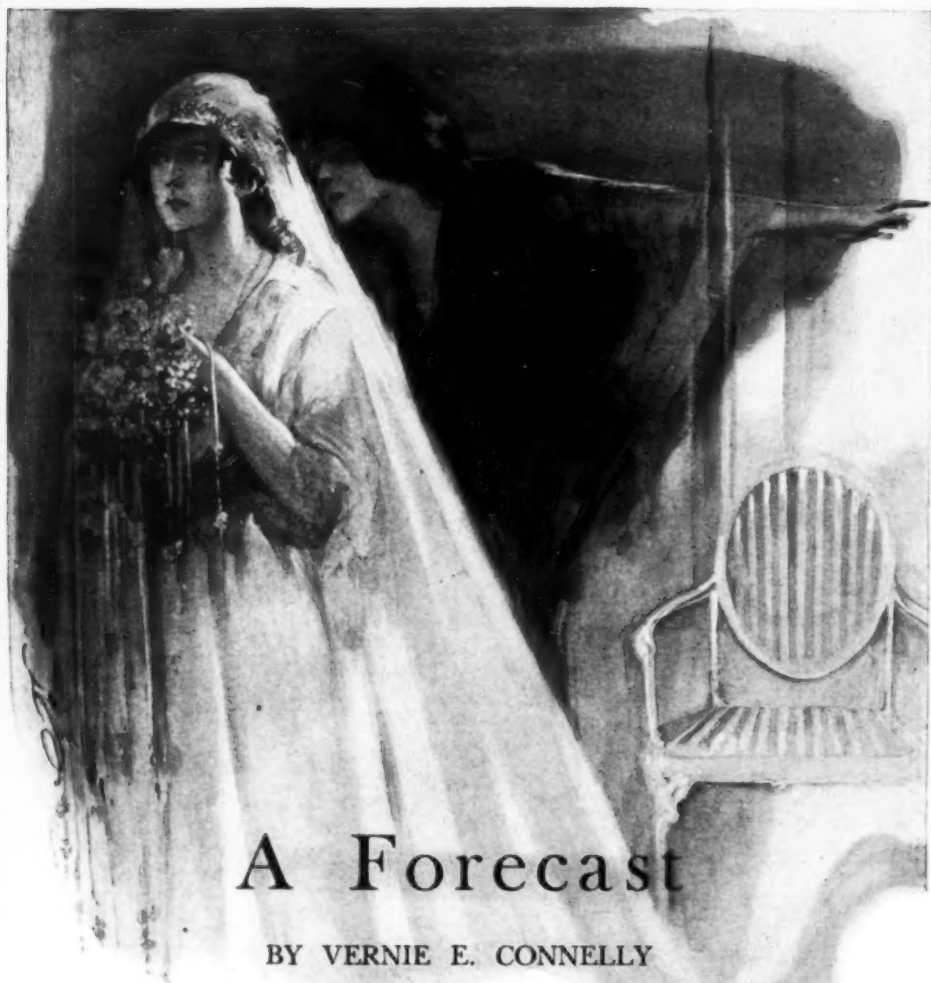
But no reconnaissance of the strategic positions in the parliamentary organization can possibly indicate from what places men may rise to power and influence in the vast tasks ahead of Congress. New voices will command ear, unknowns will lift themselves to recognition and authority. The events of the next year will largely determine the course of the Presidential campaign of 1920. It will perhaps dictate the nominees of both parties; it certainly will do much to shape the issues as they will be presented to the voters of the United States.

From the day when the new Congress meets, its proceedings will be of vital import to the nation.

#### ON RETURNING FROM FRANCE

HERE in my quiet study-room I sit  
 Among the masterpieces row on row—  
 Poet and dramatist and sage and wit—  
 The ones I loved before. And yet I know  
 Never again their lore and song shall hold  
 Entranced my soul. My thoughts are o'er the sea  
 In France, where on the crimsoned field we rolled  
 A torrent 'gainst the foe. Oh, look with me!  
 By day the long, long file of men along  
 The dusty road; by night the scarlet glare  
 Across the sky; and then anon the song  
 Of soldiers singing by the camp-fire's flare!  
 Ah, I have tasted life too deep to look  
 For its reflection in a dreamer's book!

Carl Holliday



## A Forecast

BY VERNIE E. CONNELLY

Illustrated by F. W. Small

SHE had asked for these last few moments alone. She stood before the mirror, with her bridal robes billowing about her. She gazed appraisingly upon her own loveliness, and a smile of satisfaction wreathed her lips.

Suddenly there appeared beside her a shadowy form, which said:

"I am an omen from the future. I have come to bring you a warning.

"This day you are about to marry a poor man. Do you know that you are condemning yourself to a life of toil—a life from which care-free happiness and unalloyed pleasures are eliminated?

"You are planting the seeds from which will spring the weeds of your love. When youth calls you to the haunts of pleasure, you cannot answer that call—you will have to sweep floors. If genius wells up in your soul and cries out for expression, you will have to stifle its cry and wash dishes. Your youth and your beauty, your hope and enthusiasm, will give way under the strain of hopes deferred and wishes ungratified. You will become a querulous, complaining woman, unlovely and unenvied. In your soul will be bitterness, and your spiritual nature will expire in the ashes of disappointment. The beauties of life will call

to you, and you will not have eyes to see. Love will mock at you as he goes by on the arm of youth, and in your anguish you will cry out:

"There is no such thing as love. It is a phantom that vanishes at the first harsh word, the first sting of poverty!"

"In the man whom you love so dearly to-day you will by and by discover all the faults to which mankind is heir. You will cry out that you have been cheated, and the walls of the place you call home will give back the echo. You will find yourself standing in the deep sea of life with not a sail in sight, with not a soul to throw you a life-line. You will then have to bide your time and wait until the tide of life washes you upon the shore of eternity. Are you willing to pay the price? Beware!"

## II

He had asked for these last few moments alone.

He walked nervously about the room. He paused by the mantel and fondled his old black pipe. What wonderful dreams had floated heavenward in the smoke from its well-seasoned bowl! Surely those dreams were about to come true. But before him stood a vision. The vision began to speak:

"I am an omen from the future. I have come to bring you a warning.

"You are a poor man, yet to-day you are about to marry a woman who is noted for her beauty, for her social cleverness. What does she know of home-making when the dollars are few and the pennies must be counted?

"Do you know that the results of your days of concentration and hard work will disappear like magic under the demands of family life?

"The day will soon come when you will realize that in being married you have placed a heavy mortgage upon your future, and that your chances of redeeming that mortgage with the gold of success are small indeed.

"You are taking a step that will not only increase your responsibility, but curtail your personal liberty as well. In your new contract you will no longer be able to consider yourself first. The pleasures of your bachelor days will appeal to you as strongly as they do now, but they will be too dear when bought with your wife's tears and reproaches.

"You will curse yourself because you cannot give her the material things she craves, and to which you think her beauty entitles her. You will exert all the strength of your manhood to lay worldly gifts at her feet. In doing this you will have no time to court Cupid's tender graces; and after a few years, starved of the food of love's



expression, he will fold his wings and silently depart, leaving your home bare of his gracious presence. Shorn of love's sweet ministrations, your home will be an empty shell. The gates of sentiment within your heart will close up, and you will be left stranded upon the island of disappointed hopes. Are you willing to pay the price? Beware!"

### III

He had begged for a moment with his wife-to-be before the final vows were taken. She came to him in all her bridal beauty, with an aura of love and wonder hovering o'er her. One look into each other's eyes, one fond embrace, and Cupid folded his gentle arms about them and whispered sweet hopes in their ears.

"In marriage," said the little god, "you are about to fulfil a divine command. You are obeying the laws of nature. I have placed upon your heads the crown of love, and this has made you rich indeed. Without it you might have millions and yet be poorer than any beggar who walks the streets.

"Throughout your lives let mine be the guiding hand, and I will lead you into pastures sweet. I will guide you down the path of life which runs beside the stream of hope, on whose banks grow the promises of all things good, and in whose sparkling waters you may drink the fulfilment of your destiny.

"To live life to the fullest, you must keep me always as the guardian angel of your fireside. The hostile spirits of envy, jealousy, and hate can never cross your threshold while I tend the fires of your love. I will turn the trials of your everyday life into fuel for your spiritual natures, and they will grow large and reach out to help others.

"I will open the door to the sacred chapel of parenthood, where budding youth will inspire you to new ambitions, and joy and laughter will keep warm the corners of your hearts.

"If you heed me, you will pluck all the roses of life, sip all the sweets of nature, and reach the end of the road content indeed."

And they were married.

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### AN EVENING IN JUNE

It was as fair as aught on earth is fair,  
 Rock and hill and sunset light,  
 Pine woods scenting all the mountain air,  
 And our picnic on the height;  
 And the faces and the voices that my heart holds still—  
 For the bread we broke was sacred bread  
 As the sunset touched us on that holy hill,  
 And our hearts and our souls were fed.

Linger in our hearts, oh, great warm trust  
 Of earth and the Maker of it all,  
 Of the Harmonizer of the patterns of our dust,  
 Through Whom we shall not fall,  
 Even though the fury of these winds unforetold  
 Strip away the leaves from the tree,  
 And the stark boughs rise from the crimson and the gold;  
 Be round us with eternity!

For we have been one in that beauty on the height,  
 One in that evening breeze—  
 Have bathed our brows in that sunset light,  
 Resting on the mountain's knees.  
 We have thrilled as one to the passion and the pain  
 And the strangeness and stillness of the quest  
 In that beautiful hour that can never come again,  
 But that left our souls at rest!

*William Rose Benét*



# After a Man Is Fifty

A MOVEMENT DEALING WITH A SERIOUS INDUSTRIAL PROBLEM, THAT OF THE GRAY-HAIRED MAN WHO CANNOT GET A JOB

By Victor T. J. Gannon

National Director of the Handicap Bureau, United States Employment Service

**I**F you were seventy-five years of age, a veteran of the Civil War, and lame from a wound received at Antietam or Gettysburg; if you had been in business, but unsuccessfully, because of too broad a faith in the honesty of your brother man; if you were bereft of family, relatives, and friends; if you were out of a job, lean of body, and shabby in raiment, wouldn't you feel as if the wrath of God had centered itself upon you? Wouldn't you be frantic for want of food and impelled to curse the ugly scheme of life which brought you to such a pitiful, desperate state?

We hear you say yes, and you say it in a whisper. The very thought of such a dire strait is appalling. But the picture is not overdrawn. Thousands of worthy men and women have come to such a plight.

For years industry has been worshipping with increasing fervor at the shrine of youth. The propaganda of "pep" has been sweeping and insidious—a continuous and unlifting barrage of exploitation calculated to throw an abiding fear of gray hairs into the administrators of business. Boyish faces have smiled at us from magazine pages above legends that proclaim them to be the chief executives of great corporations. Inevitably this has boomed the stock of youth and depressed the stock of age all along the line—from presidents and managers down to the humblest wage-earner.

As a consequence, scant attention has generally been paid to the old man in industry.

Early in the year 1917 I became interested in finding positions for gray-haired

men who, because the passing of time had placed its imprint upon their countenances, had made their step less springy, and mayhap dimmed their vision, found it almost impossible to secure advantageous employment. Far too many such men were roaming the streets, vainly approaching the employer, and listening to the oft-repeated:

"You don't suit."

A bureau was opened in Chicago for the purpose of finding positions for worthy, needy men past forty-five years of age. Twenty-six hundred applications from unemployed men were registered the first month. The distress of mind, the anguish of heart, the tales of destitution and desperation, the vast loss of valuable time, the all-too-evident presence of a grave fault within our civic entity, were appalling.

I knew I had to sell a bulging warehouse of worth, loyalty, and hard-earned experience. I began immediately to interest the employer along new channels, for I realized that I must do some pioneer work to establish a market for the elderly man. With the aid of some kindly publicity, of personal talks with large employers, and of circular letters to small merchants—who are the most numerous class of wage-payers—I built up an appreciation for the man beyond the prime of life.

## WORK FOR THIRTY THOUSAND MEN

In twenty-three months I have placed in good positions, at more than living wages, thirty thousand men who possess that paramount ambition—a keen desire to hold the

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**EDITORIAL NOTE**—A brief notice of Mr. Gannon's work in behalf of elderly men appeared in the "Odd Measure" department of *MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE* for April last (pages 562, 563). The movement has attained such scope and importance that our readers will be interested in this fuller description of its purposes and operations written by Mr. Gannon himself.

position. More than ninety-seven per cent of these men have made good; more than fifteen million dollars in salaries has been paid to them, and thousands of employers gladly acknowledge value received.

The gratitude of the recipients of our service has been ample and intense. Not one cent was ever charged either applicant or employer. The *per capita* placement cost for the entire effort, covering all expenses, was eighty-nine cents. The funds were contributed by corporations, public-spirited citizens, and, during the past eight months, by the Federal government through the United States Employment Service.

The average age of applicants placed was fifty-seven years. The number of dependents for food, clothing, and shelter—wives, mothers, and children—was more than fifty-seven thousand.

The youngest gray-haired man I put to work looked sixty, but he was only forty-two. The dear old dean of our placements was ninety-four years of age, but he possessed a spirit of alertness, ambition, and self-respect rarely found among men of half his years.

More than thirty-six thousand applicants have passed our way, and all have received a courtesy which made for new ambition and greater determination. The daily grind gave birth to an absolutely new phase of psychology. The "why" for such a concourse of unused mental and physical power quickly wrote a standard catechism for the direction of the bureau in its procedure.

Generally speaking, when a man has reached fifty, he should have established himself financially and socially. Some of the reasons why our registrants have reached the late forties without a competence are marital troubles, making for an unhappy home life; inability to keep abreast of the times; lack of vocational guidance; extravagance; and the scourge of a timid heart.

Greatest evil of all is the last-named. Parents unwittingly break a son's spirit, and he carries through life a curse he cannot cast off. Teachers often chide the learning mind, and the shadow grows, clouding the future. An employer's misjudgment of an employee's mentality has stifled ambition which, if given scope, would have enriched them both.

Many an applicant has come to me riding the ass of ego and jangling the discordant bells of pomposity. They claim a place

in the ten-thousand-dollar class, yet when shorn of their tinsel we find they cannot fill out an application-blank intelligently. On the other hand, hundreds of men unable to read or write have proved to be stout-hearted and long-headed.

Thirty-five men whom I placed at moderate salaries a few months ago come back now, at short intervals, to hire some of the old boys. We have striven to establish a sort of common ground for the employer who knows of us and the less fortunate who only want a chance.

One applicant, placed at twenty dollars a week, quickly rose to six thousand a year. Another who possessed fine qualities and knew how to use them, but who had become discouraged by repeated turndowns, was absolutely pushed into an eighteen-dollar job. To-day, after nine months' endeavor to overcome his false pride, he is earning seventy-five hundred dollars a year. Thus do we uncover the latent possibilities of the oldish man whose only fault is lack of the opportune smile when trying to get what he deserves.

We have never offered a married man a job paying less than fifteen dollars a week. We always endeavor to secure the highest rate for the applicant with wife and children to support.

No man should live more than forty minutes' travel from his work. It is just as important that an applicant should be pleased with his work, and satisfied that he can live upon the salary offered, before sending him out, as it is that the employer should get a man who is carefully selected according to the information furnished us.

It is but natural that some of the men should not fit the positions to which they are sent, and that a small percentage of them should prove incapable or unworthy; but if a man was worthy, and did not fit the first position offered, we sent him to another until he was fitted. We made a study of each man to learn about him and to decide for what he seemed best fitted.

#### A SOCIAL-RESEARCH LABORATORY

To all practical purposes we have been running a big research laboratory to determine the industrial value and the special characteristics of the worker of forty-five or over; and also to find out something definite about the assets and liabilities of the middle-aged or oldish man as an employee. But the main point was to help these men

to hold their own, rather than to conduct a cold-blooded economic experiment.

Sympathy, not social curiosity, was the motive that started and has maintained this movement; but the economic value of its experiences is none the less because its central purpose has been sympathetic instead of scientific.

Naturally, we have learned a good deal about employers as well as employees. At the outset we found employers generally obsessed with the idea that a tag reading "dead timber" ought to be hung on every applicant and employee over forty-five. Possibly that statement is a little too sweeping, but not much. The employment men were certainly fed up on the favorite efficiency doctrine of the infusion of young blood. Two elements, however, forced them to give middle-aged men an inning—the great war demand for labor, and the selective service which drained the country of its youthful fiber.

The use of the older man, bringing experience paid for by some one else, has proved to be God's own fresh air for that stuffy closet in which is kept the "labor turnover" skeleton. The war was surely a cleansing fire. It made junk of old ideas, for the old men have "come back" to stay back; they have proved that "age is a good purchase."

We endeavor to make the applicant understand that an employer does not care who his relatives were or what he did for a living yesterday. The employer wants to be assured that the applicant can perform the set task of to-morrow.

Those beyond the prime of life—and the "when" of such a period is ever a mooted question—generally bring into their daily activity the weight of experience gained through years of trials and successes. They are loyal to a degree that cannot be measured by money. They are not speedy, but steady, which is preferable. They stabilize, particularly when placed with the younger element.

They constitute a "safety first" factor of importance. They are permanent, not migratory. They lessen labor turnover. They minimize wastage. They talk less, produce more, and generally are worthy of respect and appreciation.

My gratifying endeavor in Chicago for men past forty-five years of age influenced my appointment by the Department of Labor to nationalize the Handicap Bureau

of the United States Employment Service. My function will be to continue helping the thousands who were the builders of yesterday, but jobless to-day and hopeless of the to-morrow—some only gray-haired, some physically crippled, and others with no commercial experience. Such will receive an attention which will not classify, segregate, or humiliate.

A few men beyond forty-five must be classed as "impossible"—temperamentally, personally, mentally, and physically—but the fact must not be overlooked that about thirty-five per cent of the employers are themselves impossible. They, too, are unfortunately endowed with temperaments and personalities which eventually, if not immediately, constitute conditions of employment distasteful to employees. To this cause is due a very large percentage of the unrest and dissension commonly laid at the door of labor.

A great deal of unrest and dissension can be eradicated through the employment of supervision, which embraces not alone discipline, but a sympathetic brotherhood as well. The street-sweeper, even as you and I, has his ambitions, his air-castles, his sympathies, his personal idiosyncrasies, meriting respect and acceptance.

#### MANY FOREMEN NEED EDUCATING

Administrators of big industries have not, as a rule, fully awakened to the fact that one of the vital problems of the present moment is that of educating superintendents and foremen to the right attitude toward the gray-haired worker, and of removing those who will not react rightly to that instruction.

It is a military axiom that an army is made or broken by its officers. You can say the same thing of industry. If its "non-coms"—its foremen and subforemen—are not of the right stuff, or if they fail to get the right view-point and attitude, there is going to be trouble and failure in production.

The foreman is the sergeant who must take the men over the top; and he must be on the job, and be right, or the drive will utterly fail. Because their support is so vital, every intelligent manufacturer is going to subject his foremen to a sharp scrutiny these days, to see that their attitude toward the elderly man is intelligent and friendly.

And it must also be sympathetic toward

the other new element—woman. The presence of a large proportion of mature men in shops and factories is bound to make the general introduction of women into industry easier in every way. To put it in a homely way, any cooccupational shop largely manned by men of middle age is going to suffer less loss of production through fooling and jollyng than the shop having the usual proportion of young men. It will soon become commonplace to see daughters working in plants beside their fathers—and perhaps their mothers, too. This slant of the new situation must be taken into consideration.

The habit of following our placements in a persistent and systematic way has added materially to the value of the work. When dissatisfaction has arisen, I have made it a rule to get both sides of each case. Some of the results of this practise have been illuminating.

One employer of rough labor for shifting freight and stock decided to try older men on his night force. Several good men were sent in response to this call. A little later they reported that labor under the night superintendent was impossible for any self-respecting man who had reached the age of gray hairs. It was evident that the superintendent had no notion of encouraging the employment of "old guys" in his department. An investigation followed, and the facts were placed before the employment manager, who promptly responded:

"I guess it's about time to get a new superintendent—one who can read the handwriting on the wall and recognize that the riot of young blood is over, and that we're coming to the time when we'll be glad to get the old boys to work, and to give them decent treatment, too. Suppose you send me a superintendent to take the place of this one who can't see a man over thirty."

After a carefully selected man had been placed in the position of superintendent, it was noted that elderly men sent to work under him did not return for reassignment. All of them remained and reported entire satisfaction. Finally, the employment manager declared:

"My night force never gave me so little trouble, or did its work so well, as under this new man. I'm solid on the old boys; and if some of our other superintendents and foremen don't show symptoms of recognizing that we're up against new conditions,

you're going to be called on to furnish more well-seasoned supervisory talent. I have about reached the conclusion that young men are not well qualified to supervise men of mature years. At any rate, I am certain that experience is fully as big an asset as 'pep.'"

Judgment in handling men and materials is the great thing in keeping up a steady and satisfactory volume of output. Of course, a young man may have a natural endowment of judgment; but generally it takes experience to develop that quality, and experience only comes with years. If my prediction is not too hopeful, a considerable number of old boys who have waited a long time for recognition and promotion will, under the new order of things, find themselves eventually in positions of authority.

In a certain Chicago business house you will encounter a dignified, white-haired man of fine presence who keeps a set of books in a hand of copperplate exactness which is fast becoming extinct. In June of last year this old bookkeeper looked his seventy-two years, for he was then in need of money and employment. To-day there is something about his bearing that takes a heavy discount from his birthday figures. His employer explains it on the theory that there are remarkable powers of reinvigoration in a raise of salary—especially in the case of a man who has exceeded the allotted threescore and ten years.

One particular placement was that of a lady sixty-seven years of age, who was in dire straits for want of employment. As she was burdened with the care of an orphan grandchild of seven, her case seemed almost hopeless. Because of her age, she was quite feeble and unable to do any sort of manual labor. To get an outside position meant that the child would be left to his own resources through the day, which would have been to his disadvantage.

By means of a chain system—telling each of four friends to tell four more, and so on—the old lady was placed as companion to another lady eighty-four years of age.

By thus making both ends meet for budding youth and golden age, the heart-strings of human nature are once more attuned. None are too old. We have placed applicants beyond ninety years of age, and none are so helpless that some niche cannot be found into which they will happily fit.

They lied who swore age rots our fiber, and shrinks the measure of a man.



# Some Famous Utopias

PHILOSOPHERS' DREAMS OF IDEAL COMMONWEALTHS, AND THEIR ATTEMPTED APPLICATION IN A LONG SERIES OF HISTORIC EXPERIMENTS

By Richard Le Gallienne

AT a moment when representatives of the leading nations of our troubled planet are earnestly in counsel as to the best way of remolding this sorry scheme of things, it is interesting and suggestive to recall some of those earlier schemes and experiments by means of which idealists and reformers of the past sought to grapple with the riddle of the painful earth. And, indeed, of such seminal importance were some of those old schemes and experiments that one may indulge the fancy of the World of Shades being almost as much exercised as our living selves as to the outcome of the present august deliberations "to keep the world safe for democracy." At the shoulders of the visible representatives at the Peace Congress, one can imagine such invisible presences as those of Plato and Sir Thomas More, Bacon and Campanella, Rousseau, Morelly, and Fourier—not forgetting a deputation from Brook Farm—bending over in eager attention to the deliberations of a conclave, the mere summoning of which shows that the political theorists of the past did not dream and labor wholly in vain.

Plato would find at least one matter for rejoicing in that more than one of the leading spirits taking part in that conclave are philosophers; for, in his "Republic," the great Athenian laid down that, "if the constitution of a state is to be carried to perfection," one of its conditions will be that "its kings must be those who have shown the greatest ability in philosophy and the greatest aptitude for war. . . . The highest political power must, by some means or other, be vested in philosophers." And for the encouragement of these and the others at work upon the "League of Nations," could we conceive his making himself heard, Plato might recall his answer to those who

criticised the impracticality of his own schemes.

"The possibility of realizing such a commonwealth in actual practise," he argued of his own imaginary republic, "is quite a secondary consideration, which does not in the least affect the soundness of the method or the truth of the results. . . . All that can fairly be demanded is to show how the imperfect politics at present existing may be brought most nearly into harmony with the perfect state" which he proceeded to describe.

## PLATO'S DREAM OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Plato's "Republic" was the earliest attempt at putting on paper a pattern commonwealth. The scheme was an exceedingly arbitrary one, and, like most subsequent utopias, it began by not merely leaving out, but discountenancing the individualism of human nature. Yet the sterner and most inhuman of its conditions had already been successfully embodied in the military state of Sparta, and its communism—not merely of land and goods, but also of women and children—was to be tried out in a great many subsequent social experiments.

The state—or rather the city, for Plato was thinking in terms of a small community—was to be the unit, the individual man or woman merely a contributory fraction of that unit, and Christ's counsel to "love thy neighbor as thyself" was to be put in daily practise by the citizens of Plato's republic. "That city, then," he says, "is best conducted in which the largest proportion of citizens apply the words 'mine' and 'not mine' similarly to the same objects; or, in other words, that city which comes nearest to the condition of an individual man. Then will not our citizens

be remarkable for sharing in the same interest, which they will call 'mine'; and having this common interest, will they not thereby possess in a remarkable degree a community in pleasure and pain?"

But Plato's republic was essentially aristocratic. The aim of its citizens was to be the attainment of wisdom. Hard and disagreeable work was to be done by slaves, nor did the citizens soil their fingers by trade. That was left to "strangers." No one could own money or precious metals, and none but the guardians, or magistrates, and the auxiliaries, or soldiers, might possess land, and that only collectively. These auxiliaries, however, came nearest to being a privileged class, and there is one quaint provision—which would seem to have been generously revived for the benefit of our recent heroes—that the distinguished soldier should have the right to "kiss and be kissed by all"—"no one whom he has a mind to kiss shall be permitted to refuse him the satisfaction."

Poets and musicians and the tellers of tales were allowed the practise of their arts only under strict censorship. No soft, enervating poetry or music was permitted, and a watchful eye was kept on the substance of stories—"nothing derogatory to the dignity of the gods must be admitted in these tales." Nothing tending to weaken or corrupt the morale of the citizen was allowed expression in the arts. Idle singers of an empty day, and practitioners of art for art's sake, were promptly shown to the city gates.

Guardians, auxiliaries, and producers were the three classes of citizens, the guardians being the wisest men over fifty. Women, it may be said, were recognized as equals with men, and had the same education and civic duties, even to taking their part in war, so far as their sex allowed. It is evident that Plato would have entirely approved of the modern "emancipation of women," though he could scarcely have believed that it would take twenty-four centuries to bring it about.

#### SIR THOMAS MORE'S "UTOPIA"

While Plato's "Republic" has exercised an influence on all subsequent political and social dreamers, the book which fixed the type and has given a generic name to all such ideal reconstructions of society was the "Utopia" of Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), the famous English scholar and

statesman, chancellor, friend, and victim of Henry VIII. More was a leading figure among the remarkable group of "humanists" which first embodied in England the influences of the "new learning" of the Italian renaissance. He was a young man when the voyages of Amerigo Vespucci and Columbus were stirring the imaginations of his seagoing countrymen. The hero of his romance, one *Ralph Hythloday*, purports to have sailed with Vespucci, but, having been separated from him by the chances of the sea, had found refuge in a hitherto undiscovered island of the western ocean named Utopia. The island was inhabited by so happy a people, living under so perfect a system of government, that *Hythloday*, on his return, is moved to describe their state for the benefit of his less happy fellows.

The book was written in Latin, under the editorship of More's bosom friend, Erasmus, and was published in Louvain in 1516. It attracted much attention, and during the next few years it was translated into Italian, Dutch, and German; but no English version of it appeared until after More's death. Under the semblance of a fanciful narrative, it was too pointed an arraignment of English social conditions to have pleased the king—at least in the vulgar tongue. Henry VIII, who was a good Latinist himself, seems to have tolerated it in the obscurity of a language where it was safe from the common people, and both Erasmus and More were favorites of his, till More refused to recognize him as head of the English church—a refusal which cost him the king's friendship and his own life.

The word Utopia is made up of two Greek words meaning "nowhere." Rabelais was soon to adopt it into his fantastic geography in the same sense, and such recent utopias as William Morris's "News from Nowhere," and Butler's "Erewhon" (an anagram for "nowhere"), merely translate it into English. There is good reason for its immediate influence on its time, and for the hold which it has ever since retained as the outstanding classic of its kind; for its fantastic notions were blended with much common sense and sound criticism of contemporary abuses, and it is vitalized throughout with a warm and enlightened humanity. The astonishing modernity of many of its attitudes make it as live a book to-day as when it was published, and the case of the poor

against the oppressive rich has never been stated with more force and sympathy.

#### PROFITEERS OF THREE CENTURIES AGO

More wrote at a time when the great landowners of England were sowing the seeds of all subsequent agrarian unrest by unlawfully enclosing in their domains vast tracts of land which had hitherto belonged to the people in common, those wide "commons"—hence the word—where the poorest cottier or artisan might pasture his cow, or a few sheep, and thus eke out his other earnings. The rich even tore down homesteads for the purpose of these enclosures, which they either turned into "chases" and hunting preserves, or into pastures for sheep-raising, a business which they undertook on a large scale, and in a manner identical with the latter-day profiteer.

Suppose the sheep should increase ever so much, this price is not like to fall. As they are not pressed to sell them sooner than they have a mind to it, so they never do it till they have raised the price as high as possible.

The result of these iniquitous enclosures was that a flood of landless men was loosed upon the country, and these, unable to find sufficient work, "destitute of service, either starve for hunger or turn manfully thieves; for what," More fearlessly adds, "would you have them to do?" The punishment for the smallest theft in those days, and for centuries after, was usually death—a judicial crime to which More is indignantly awake, though the general consciousness was to remain dead to the inhumanity till the nineteenth century.

There are dreadful punishments enacted against thieves, but it were much better to make such good provisions by which every man might be put in a method how to live, and so be preserved from the fatal necessity of stealing and dying for it.

They managed such matters better in Utopia, he said. There was no private property, either of land or of goods, nor was any one idle there, but every one worked—a six-hour day—for the common benefit, and all shared alike in the products, according to their needs.

#### MORE'S VIEWS ON LABOR

Here is a passage which in its fearless classification of the idlers of his own time, and in the distinction drawn between useful and useless labor, is characteristic of the general thought of the book, and explains

the prophetic hold it was to have on subsequent generations:

First, women generally do little, who are half of mankind; and if some few women are diligent, their husbands are idle. Then consider the great company of idle priests, and of those that are called religious men; add to these all rich men, chiefly those that have estates in land, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their families, made up of idle persons, that are kept more for show than use; add to these all those strong and lusty beggars that go about pretending some disease in excuse for their begging; and upon the whole account you will find that the number of those by whose labors mankind is supplied is much less than you perhaps imagined.

Then consider how few of those that work are employed in labors that are of real service; for we who measure all things by money give rise to many trades that are both vain and superfluous, and serve only to support riot and luxury. For if those who work were employed only in such things as the conveniences of life require, there would be such an abundance of them that the prices of them would so sink that tradesmen could not be maintained by their gains. If all those who labor about useless things were set to more profitable employments, and if all they that languish out their lives in sloth and idleness, every one of whom consumes as much as any two of the men that are at work, were forced to labor, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to mankind, especially while pleasure is kept within its due bounds.

"Pleasure kept within its due bounds"—not justice, or wisdom, as with Plato—was our being's end and aim, according to the Utopians:

They reckon that all our actions and even all our virtues terminate in pleasure, as in our chief end and greatest happiness; and they call every motion or state, either of body or mind, in which Nature teaches us to delight, a pleasure.

Health, according to More, was the best pleasure, and the basis of all others—"that which results from an undisturbed and vigorous constitution of body, when life and active spirits seem to actuate every part. This lively health, when entirely free from all mixture of pain, of itself gives an inward pleasure, independent of all external objects of delight." More evidently meant the same thing as his nineteenth-century disciple, William Morris:

The reward of labor is *life*. Is that not enough?

Many things which usually "men mis-call delight," were laughed at, or despised, in Utopia. Hunting, for example, was "turned over to the butchers," who, by the way, were "slaves"—that is, men con-

demned to servitude for crimes. The Utopians "look on the desire of the bloodshed, even of beasts, as a mark of a mind that is already corrupted with cruelty, or that at least by the frequent returns of so brutal a pleasure must degenerate into it."

#### SOME STRANGE UTOPIAN NOTIONS

That gold and silver should be robbed of their power to corrupt and divide, the Utopians used them only for the basest and humblest purposes, for homely household conveniences, and for the fetters of slaves. Diamonds and other precious stones were given to children to play with, and luxury in dress was regarded as folly.

How should any value himself because his cloth is made of a finer thread? For how fine soever that thread may be, it was once no better than the fleece of a sheep, and that sheep was a sheep still for all its wearing it.

Thus, when an embassy from a foreign state, thinking to overawe the simple Utopians with its splendor, came in rich garments and decked with jewels, the very children, who had outgrown such playthings, called to their mothers and cried out:

"See that great fool that wears pearls and gems, as if he were yet a child."

"Hold your peace," their mothers answered. "This, I believe, is one of the ambassador's fools."

There were no lawyers among the Utopians, "for they consider them as a sort of people whose profession it is to disguise matters, and to wrest the laws"; nor did they believe in war or standing armies, yet, for self-protection, a certain military training was incumbent upon all, including the women, as with Plato. But More will have none of Plato's community of women. Marriage among the Utopians is a monogamous institution, as among Christians, but eugenics were to some degree considered in their quaint match-making. Euthanasia, also, was suggested, but not enforced, for the incurably sick or wearily aged. The state would provide them with painless suicide, if so desired; the priests and magistrates exhorting them as to the painful uselessness of continued existence.

Among other anticipations of modernity we come on incubators for chickens:

They breed an infinite multitude of chickens in a very curious manner; for the hens do not sit and hatch them, but a vast number of eggs is laid in a gentle and equal heat in order to be hatched.

And the sum of it all is that in Utopia "there is no unequal distribution, so that no man is poor, none in necessity; and though no man has anything, yet they are all rich; for what can make a man so rich as to lead a serene and cheerful life, free from anxieties, neither apprehending want himself, nor vexed with the endless complaints of his wife?"

As to the machinery of this happy state, it is simple and without novelty, being run by a system of elective magistracies, presided over by a prince, also elected—"for life, unless he is removed upon suspicion of some design to enslave the people."

#### BACON'S PARADISE OF SCIENCE

The "New Atlantis" of Lord Bacon (1629) was the next famous attempt—

To build a shadowy isle of bliss  
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,  
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be.

The legend of that lost continent from which the Atlantic Ocean takes its name not only haunted the dreams of antiquity, but has found supporters among modern geologists. There, it was fabled, were the Elysian Fields of the happy and lordly dead—one of the many paradises or habitats of the golden age with which mankind from time immemorial has solaced its weary heart; such as the Welsh Avalon, the Irish Toi-na-Og and St. Brendan's Isle, the Portuguese Isle of Seven Cities, and the Greek Isles of the Blest.

Bacon's "New Atlantis" has merely a literary and academic value. Its author had little or nothing of More's humanity, and, as with most other creators of ideal commonwealths, he created it in his own image. As Plato had constructed his republic for philosophers, Bacon constructed his for men of science.

"The end of our foundation," he says, "is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible." As with Goethe, "light, and more light," was to be the desideratum of his dream-world.

"But thus you see we maintain a trade," he says, "not for gold, silver, or jewels, not for silks nor for spices, nor for any commodity of matter, but only for God's first creation, light; to have light, I say, of the growth of all parts of the world."

It was an ideal which the twentieth cen-



tury will certainly not gainsay, and the "New Atlantis" concludes with a list of scientific "departments" which have a fascinating suggestiveness, and something of the prophetic quality which belongs always to a brain in advance of its time. Thus, doubtless, Mr. Burbank has long ago been interested in the department "to make divers new plants, differing from the vulgar, and to make one tree or plant turn into another."

#### CAMPANELLA, HARRINGTON, AND OTHERS

A contemporary of Bacon, Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639), an Italian, who died in France, made a somewhat more influential addition to the literature of Utopia in "The City of the Sun," written during a twenty-seven years' imprisonment in the dungeons of the Inquisition at Naples. Campanella was a Dominican monk, and his speculations were determined, on the one hand, by his ecclesiastical training, and, on the other, by the natural bent of his mind toward scientific investigation. He advocated communism under ecclesiastical authority, and as Plato's speculations had been influenced by Sparta, Campanella's were influenced by the Jesuit "ideal commonwealth" of Paraguay, which has been described as "the most extensive and successful attempt at establishing a society after the dreams of idealists and reformers—a heroic example of the application of close, minute social control to the affairs of a society based upon communism."

But the Jesuits of Paraguay were influenced in their turn by Campanella, and their constitution, in which we also find traces of More, was very much like that of the City of the Sun. It could hardly be called liberty, though indeed it reduced the working day to four hours, advocated the community of property, and made "the greatest good of the greatest number" the law of the state. The individual, of course, did not exist, and, in spite of its admirable features, it is to be feared that both the good and the goods of the "ideal commonwealth" of Paraguay accrued in the main to the idealists who were in charge of it.

As a humorous parenthesis, one may interpose here a reference to the mock Utopia of Bishop Joseph Hall (1574-1656), the great English satirist, who, like most really wise men, was none the less serious for all his wit. In his satire, "Crapulia," he refers to the form of government as a state

which "seemed to be a democracy, in which all governed and none obeyed. They settled affairs at public meetings, in which all spoke and none listened, and they had a perpetual parliament." One can scarcely believe that these words were printed some three hundred years ago.

Harrington's "Oceana" (1656), was a fashionable utopia of its time, as was to be expected from its belief in a natural aristocracy among men, and from its advocacy of a limited monarchy and private ownership of land as essential alike to the safety of society and the well-being of the individual.

Leaving on one side writers such as Fénelon, Chateaubriand, and Rousseau, and other apostles of the "golden age" and of a "state of nature" which has never yet existed in natural history, Morelly's "Code de la Nature" (1754) must be mentioned as a conspicuous contribution toward the building of Utopia, though Morelly does little more than emphasize the ideas of his predecessors, with a disagreeable emphasis on sexual community. It is curious that much utopian experimentation has run in this direction.

One of the earliest, in fact almost immediate, applications of More's "Utopia" was that of John of Leyden, the fanatic leader of the sect of Anabaptists, who, an innkeeper of the city of Leyden, set up there "the throne of David," nominating from "the proletariat" twelve judges, after Biblical tradition, and claiming a divine revelation of himself as king of "the New Zion." In this capacity, not forgetting to remind his followers of King Solomon, John of Leyden took unto himself fifteen wives. "Increase and multiply"—was not that a divine command? It is comforting to know that in 1536, John and his followers were brought to reason and execution by the Bishop of Munster.

#### ROBERT OWEN AND NEW HARMONY

It is to the credit of the famous Manchester man, Robert Owen (1771-1858), that, though born in an age peculiarly utopian, after the fashion of John of Leyden, he was not troubled with temperamental notions. His virtues and vices were those of his native city—that is, those of one of the earliest captains of industry. He was perhaps the first of those captains to disguise an industrial tyranny under the aspect of a social organization. Had

he lived now his workshops would be adorned with quotations from Rousseau and Helvetius, or their modern equivalents. As it was, those writers had inspired him to build up a capitalistic industry—the continuation of a famous thread manufactory, which he was called upon to manage at twenty, and ended, of course, by owning.

Owen had begun life as the son of a village laborer, and continued it as a utopian philosopher with ample means, whose work, like that of most such utopians, consisted in seeing that others worked. This son of a village laborer—proletarian, as he would nowadays be called—had devised a system by which he could check idleness in his mill with a glance of his eye:

Over each loom there hangs a square of wood, each side of which is painted a different color, black, blue, yellow, and white. If the workman has misconducted himself on the preceding day, the color which is exposed to view is black; if he has conducted himself well it is white. Owen, by walking through the workshop, sees at a glance upon the telegraph the condition of each of his employees.

This was Robert Owen's idea of a utopia—for himself, however it seemed to his workmen. The idea is not unfamiliar today, but it was novel enough between 1771 and 1858 to have encouraged him to finance his expensive "New Harmony" experiment in Indiana, the failure of which, with a loss of two hundred thousand dollars, did nothing to enlighten him.

Owen's ideas, running parallel with those of Fourier, with the help of Morely, were to send Cabet (1788-1856), on his "Voyage en Icarie." America was the country chosen for trying out these Anglo-French dreams. Since America made a success of its isolated self, it has been hard for Europe to leave it alone. Every sort of experiment, religious and political, has been tried upon it. It has indeed seemed virgin soil to every form of half-baked idealism and cynical quackery. No more significant evidence of the robustness of its constitution is to be found than its survival after the application of almost every known philosophic nostrum.

#### FOURIER AND HIS PHALANSTERIES

Probably the most methodically crack-brained of all utopians was Charles Fourier of Besançon (1772-1837). A brilliant scholar, he seems to have been possessed by a positive disease of "order" and "har-

mony," a mania for mathematical patterns, numbers, measurements, classifications, and so forth. The rhythmic precision of music and the punctual ordering and interrelation of the stars, the grouping of natural species in flowers and animals, obsessed him to such a degree that he came to conceive of human beings as naturally falling into classes according to their correspondences or "passions," of which he considered twelve as fundamental:

Three "actuating" passions (the alternating, emulative, and composite) bring the five "sensitive" passions (touch, taste, sight, hearing, and smell) into harmony with the four "affective" passions (love, friendship, ambition, and familism or paternity).

Eighteen hundred persons were needed to constitute such a harmony, to which he gave the name of "phalanx"; and though nowadays his ideas read like midsummer madness, they found men such as Charles A. Dana, George Ripley, William Ellery Channing, and Albert Brisbane to take them seriously. Brisbane was the most enthusiastic of the American disciples of Fourier, and no less than forty phalansteries, as the communal organizations of the Fourierites were called, were founded between 1840 and 1850. They all ended in bankruptcy and laughter. Even Mr. Morris Hillquit has confessed that these Fourier experiments, like the similar experiment of Cabet's Icarians in Texas (1848), were failures. The Oneida Community, founded by John Humphrey Noyes in 1848, proved the most long-lived of any of them, its cohesion being perhaps accounted for by its religious enthusiasm. For thirty years it flourished as a Perfectionist organization, and it still survives, though it has suffered a sea change into a merely commercial company for the manufacture of silverware.

#### THE BROOK FARM EXPERIMENT

The most famous American experiment of this sort was that refreshingly innocent enterprise, Brook Farm, which Hawthorne has somewhat too condescendingly immortalized in "The Blithedale Romance," and over which, from time to time, Emerson spread his benedictory smile. The Brook Farm Institute of Agriculture and Education was organized on September 29, 1841, with George Ripley, Minor Pratt, and Charles A. Dana as its leading and responsible spirits. Emerson, with that hold which,

for all his transcendentalism, he always kept on reality—on real estate, in this case—and with his characteristic gentle badinage, had answered Ripley's invitation to become a Brook Farmer by saying that "investments in Concord were securer than they were likely to be at Brook Farm." It is well to remember, in reading Emerson, that he was a very typical son of New England. For that reason, perhaps, his philosophy grows every day more potent and authoritative, so strangely combining common sense with Platonic and Brahmanistic moonshine; for when Emerson hitched his wagon to a star, he did not forget the wagon.

Nor would it be fair to say that the Brook Farmers forgot their wagons, either. As one reads the records of their too short-lived experiment, one realizes that their enterprise was both conceived and conducted on a remarkably sound business basis—for dreamers. Its untimely end was due mainly to bad luck—and to Brisbane, with his well-meant intrusion of a phalanstery, which was destroyed by fire at the moment of its completion, with a loss of seven thousand dollars. Its manifesto is worth recalling and remembering:

To insure a more natural union between intellectual and manual labor than now exists; to combine the thinker and the worker, as far as possible, in the same individual; to guarantee the highest mental freedom by providing all with labor adapted to their tastes and talents, and securing to them the fruits of their industry; to do away with the necessity of menial services by opening the benefits of education and the profits of labor to all; and thus to prepare a society of liberal, intelligent, and cultivated persons, whose relations with each other would permit a more wholesome and simple life than can be led amidst the pressure of our competitive institutions.

From what one reads, not merely of the famous personalities connected with it, but of those mute, inglorious stockholders who laughed and roughed it with their wives and families and dreams on that hundred and seventy acres of farm-land which, alas, no earthly compost could make sufficiently productive, one cannot but feel that Brook Farm came as near to being a real utopia as any that has ever been attempted. There was a gaiety, a comradely kindness, about it which is very winning in the record; and it was pleasantly free alike from the priggishness of puritanism and from that disagreeable sexual laxity which seems still to be one of the many dogmas

of revolution. All the same, gladly admitting the childlike attractiveness of Brook Farm, it must eventually be said of that, as of all other such utopian experiments, that not only are they made on too small a scale to count against the great world organizations in which they nest as the nests of birds in a tall oak-tree, but that they implicitly rely for their very existence upon the stability of those organizations which they would presumably overthrow. Shares in Brook Farm cost five hundred dollars, and, small as were the charges for "associates who did not work"—no more, indeed, than four dollars a week, and "this to include rent, fuel, light, and washing"—yet one is obliged to remark that payment was to be in United States currency, guaranteed by a huge republic, a commonwealth of arduous workers, banded together by broad and deep instincts of freedom, and not unlit by dreams.

The failure of all utopias whatsoever has come, and will come, of the simple fact that they are dealing with humanity, and that humanity invincibly resists being crushed into a formula. The best thing about humanity is its constant surprise, its accident of doing something unexpectedly ideal in its large, free way. It has an oceanic manner of dealing with those who would control its great tides. It realizes, among other things, that when certain millions of individuals are asked altruistically to give up their personal prepossessions for the common good, to subscribe to some doctrine of "the one for all," should they support the demand, they would only be ministering to the egoism of a few individuals masquerading as the state. Such men—men like Robert Owen or Charles Fourier—ask nothing but to rule over their fellows, to gratify not so much an unselfish dream of social amelioration, but an old-fashioned determination for the scepter and the whip-hand.

Human egoism is still the controlling factor in human affairs, and king and capitalist no more obstruct the realization of utopian dreams and hopes than the labor leader who, for the moment, seems to be taking the universe too arrogantly in hand. Perhaps the conclusion of the whole matter will prove, as Campanella said at the end of his "City of the Sun":

Ah, well! God gives all in His good time. They astrologize too much.

# The Three Makers of the New Canada

MACDONALD, CHIEF OF THE FATHERS OF THE DOMINION—LAURIER, THE GREAT LIBERAL LEADER WHO LATELY PASSED AWAY—BORDEN, THE WAR PREMIER WHO IS NOW IN POWER

By Frank Maitland

SIR WILFRID LAURIER now belongs to the ages; and, as time lends proper perspective, at the bar of history will his achievements in the making of the Canadian Dominion be judged. Death came to him suddenly on February 17, exactly fourteen months after the most crushing defeat of his long political career. For many years the most popular and best-loved of all Canadian leaders, despite his electoral defeats, he is sincerely mourned to-day by all Canadians, regardless of their political views or party ties. He was a great Canadian; since the death of Sir John A. Macdonald in 1891, the first in the affections of the Canadian people, and in many respects the greatest of all the native sons of the Dominion.

Three names stand out in Canadian history above all others—Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and Sir Robert Borden. Each name stands for a distinct achievement in the making of the new Dominion.

Macdonald was the chief of the fathers of confederation. True, he was not the first to suggest the project, but without his skilful leadership and persuasive personality confederation would have been an impossible dream. When the Canadian Dominion of to-day was merely British North America; when the great West was an unknown wilderness, generally believed to be worthless and uninhabitable; when "Canada" meant only a small strip of territory along the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario; when the maritime provinces of the present Dominion were isolated from Canada by distance and geographical barriers, and from

one another by petty provincial jealousies; when the ultimate absorption of all these small, struggling communities by the great American republic seemed to be inevitably decreed by nature and by geographical law—even then Macdonald saw a vision of the Canada of to-day, with its influential place in the councils of a new British Empire.

In those days his dream seemed foolish and impracticable. The provinces that were to be formed into the new Dominion had little in common. French Canada and English Canada, the present provinces of Quebec and Ontario, were engaged in a perpetual quarrel of race and creed. The maritime provinces down on the Atlantic, with their own petty jealousies, were far away, and there was no railway connection with them. The populations of all the provinces were sadly discouraged, and it was becoming the fashion to look to Washington for relief.

Even the descendants of the United Empire Loyalists were losing faith in the future. Their fathers and grandfathers had come into the Canadian wilderness at the time of the American Revolution, sacrificing all that they possessed rather than own allegiance to a flag that was not British. Their intensely British sentiment had been handed down from father to son. Yet even those of United Empire Loyalist stock had almost despaired of the task of building up a strong and prosperous Canada alongside the giant republic.

There were many others who contributed to the achievement of the seemingly impossible, but it was "John A." who, in a difficult time, was the chief of the makers of



the Dominion. It was his winning personality and cheery optimism that won the support of the pessimists and doubters, his genius for leadership that secured the co-operation of strong leaders who could have served together under no other man.

#### THE TASK OF BUILDING A NATION

Confederation was accomplished in 1867. The greater task then remained to round out the new Dominion by the acquisition of the great northwest—then the property of the Hudson's Bay Company—and British Columbia on the Pacific coast; to connect this new territory with old Canada by means of a transcontinental railway; to build a railway connection between Ontario and Quebec and the maritime provinces; and, above all, to create a national sentiment in this new Dominion, which was, after all, the artificial creation of a small group of far-seeing but venturesome statesmen. It was a task for giants, but they were giants who controlled the destinies of Canada in those days; and the greatest of them all was Macdonald.

The task was made all the harder by the nearness of the United States. In the decades that followed the Civil War, the great republic grew in wealth and population with phenomenal rapidity. In competition with her big neighbor, Canada could attract but little immigration. The greater opportunities of the more highly developed country to the south offered constant temptation to the brightest and most ambitious of Canadian youth to seek in the United States richer prizes in life than they could hope to secure at home.

To promote interprovincial trade, in defiance of geography to direct commercial currents east and west instead of north and south, Sir John subsidized heavily, with cash and immense grants of land, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. The road was built at a time when Canada had a population of scarcely four millions. From old Canada it jumped a thousand miles across a wilderness of rock and scrub lying north of Lakes Huron and Superior. It then reached a country which is now the chief granary of the empire; but at that time the whole vast prairie region contained scarcely ten thousand white people, and there was no certainty that it would ever be capable of profitable production.

Having crossed the prairies, the railway had still to bridge a sea of mountains in

order to reach a handful of white population on the Pacific coast. Small wonder that Sir John's political opponents predicted that he would bankrupt the Dominion at its birth, and that the Canadian Pacific could never earn the grease for its axles! That Sir John was right and his opponents wrong, the prosperity of the world's greatest railway is conclusive proof to-day; but the project was nevertheless a magnificent gamble, and none but Sir John could have induced Canadians to make it.

To build up a strong Dominion, Sir John advocated and secured the adoption of his "national policy." The "N. P." included the building of railways and canals; but it is usually associated in the public mind with the protective tariff which he established for the fostering of Canadian industries. Around the tariff question centered for decades the chief battles of Canadian political history, and the end thereof is not yet.

In the late eighties there arose a formidable movement for commercial union with the United States—free trade between Canada and the United States, with a common tariff against the rest of the world, including Great Britain. The Liberal party never went quite so far as to adopt this policy in its entirety, but it did advocate unrestricted reciprocity. Sir John believed that commercial union would inevitably result in the absorption of Canada by her big neighbor; and probably he was right, although such result was far from the thoughts of the Liberal leaders.

"A British subject I was born; a British subject I will die," was his rallying cry in his last political battle in 1891—fought, as he sincerely believed, for the preservation of a distinct Canadian nationality and the maintenance of the British connection. He won his election by a narrow majority. The battle cost him his life. He was an old man, and the hardships of a political campaign in February and March were beyond his strength. Three months after his hard-earned triumph Canada mourned the death of the greatest of her statesmen. He had "fought his fight in times of bitter fear," and he "died scarce knowing how the day had gone."

Macdonald laid the foundations of the Canada of to-day; Laurier continued his work on the superstructure. He became premier in 1896, following a period of acute economic depression, during which many Canadians had despaired of their country

and had been tempted to seek relief in annexation to the United States. For years there had been an alarming annual exodus of tens of thousands of Canadians to the United States. Canada was losing heavily each year of the best blood of the Dominion.

#### LAURIER AS PREMIER (1896-1911)

Sir Wilfrid's cheery optimism gave Canadians a national self-confidence which they had lost in the years that intervened between the death of Macdonald in 1891 and the Liberal victory in 1896. He formed an "administration of all the talents," which was probably the strongest cabinet in Canada's history. It is a disputed question whether or not the effect was intended, but he gave a new birth to the imperial enthusiasm of Canada by his establishment of the British preferential tariff. Great constructive policies were inaugurated, and a vigorous campaign for immigration was successfully undertaken.

In the new era of national self-confidence and industrial and commercial prosperity, the exodus to the United States came to an end, and was followed by a movement of population from the south to the north. There were many years of expansion and prosperity, during which the western provinces were formed and peopled. "Laurier's luck" was the subject of somewhat bitter comment, at times, by Sir Wilfrid's political opponents, but his host of supporters claimed for him that the crops ripened for bounteous harvests in the sunshine of his smile. He was the idol of his people, and even his opponents loved him. Not even in his native province of Quebec was he ever accorded more demonstratively affectionate receptions than in the city of Toronto, where every voter loved him, but not more than one in five would cast a ballot for him.

The writer remembers well a triumphant procession of the Liberal leader through the streets of Toronto in the autumn of 1900. It seemed that Sir Wilfrid had captured the very citadel of the Conservative party. That night, when he rose to speak in Massey Hall, it was several minutes before his voice could be heard, so prolonged and enthusiastic was the applause; but Sir Wilfrid was not deceived.

"I am touched to the heart by your kind welcome. But," he said, with a twinkle in his eye and a flash of the famous sunny smile, "if you would cheer me a little less

and vote for my candidates a little more consistently, my campaign managers would consider my visit a success."

A week later, every Laurier candidate in Toronto was badly defeated.

Laurier's selection as Liberal leader, in 1887, was considered at the time a daring political experiment. He is the only French-Canadian who has gained the premiership since confederation; the only French-Canadian who has been the leader of a national party. He himself doubted the wisdom of his selection, as he feared the traditional distrust in Ontario of his native province of Quebec.

Nor was there at the time any apparent reason to believe that he was sure of the support of the people of his own race, language, and religion. Sir John Macdonald was then at his greatest strength. He had a genius for commanding the support of Protestant, Orange, English-speaking Ontario at the same time that he commanded a majority in Quebec. Several of his French-Canadian colleagues, of whom Chabreau and Langevin were the most notable, had a hold upon the support of the Quebec hierarchy and the votes of French Canada which it seemed madness for Laurier to hope to dispute.

A devout Roman Catholic, Laurier, nevertheless, did not stand high in the esteem of his church; and the church had always been the political master of his province and his race. He had first gained prominence by disputing the right of its heads to prevent the faithful from reading certain books that were under the clerical ban. As a child, he had attended a Protestant school in order to learn the rudiments of the English language, of which he was to become in later years the eloquent master. A Scottish Presbyterian elder had been the friend of his youth, and from him the young Laurier had learned a broad tolerance of Protestant views and ideals which was not regarded with favor by the heads of his church.

#### LAURIER'S WORK FOR CANADIAN UNITY

The racial and religious antagonism between Ontario and Quebec has its roots in the distant past. Few can doubt that it was Sir Wilfrid Laurier's sincere desire to break down that antagonism, that indeed he believed this to be his supreme duty. History will record that his success was only partial, that his great mistake of 1917

in opposing the win-the-war movement of that year in great measure destroyed the good work of a lifetime; but his sincerity in the effort none can doubt.

"If there is anything to which I have devoted my political life," he said in 1900, "it is to try to promote unity, harmony, and amity between the diverse elements of this country. My friends can desert me, they can remove their confidence from me, they can withdraw the trust they have placed in my hands, but never shall I deviate from that line of policy. Whatever may be the consequences, whether loss of prestige, loss of popularity, or loss of power, I feel that I am in the right, and I know that a time will come when every man will render me full justice on that score."

A bitter quarrel of race and creed was raging at the time when he became Liberal leader, and his advisers feared a hostile reception for him in Ontario. Against the advice of his friends he held a great meeting in Toronto, at which his eloquence and charm, and his tolerant views, which it was plain were sincerely held, captured a hostile audience and established his popularity in Ontario for all time. From that day, Ontario might vote for or against him, but Ontario always respected, admired, and even loved him.

When he became premier, in 1896, it was by the overwhelming vote of his own province and race, despite the open hostility of the clerical leaders. Manitoba had abolished Roman Catholic separate schools, and the Dominion government, controlled by the Conservatives, had introduced legislation to force that province to restore them. It was a policy which met with the approval of the bishops, but Laurier stood for provincial rights, and carried his own people with him. He defied the church and won.

For the sake of historical accuracy, it must be recorded here that nine years later he reversed his policy on this question. He did not interfere with the school policy of Manitoba, but when the time was ripe for the forming of two new provinces in the west, in 1905, he placed in the constitutions given them a provision for a system of separate schools; and he did so without allowing the provinces to be consulted in the matter. He stood bravely for provincial rights in 1896, but surrendered to the heads of the church in 1905.

Like Sir John Macdonald, Laurier was often accused of opportunism; and history

will record of both statesmen that in many instances the accusation was justified. But of both it must also be recorded that they never lost sight of their goal.

Macdonald had the imperial vision. His effort was always toward a powerful Canada as an influential part of a new British Empire. Laurier was disposed to put greater stress upon Canadian autonomy and a distinctive Canadian nationality. In an early speech, which he never repudiated in later years, he looked forward to Canadian independence. The colony, he said, must part from the mother country "as the ripe fruit drops from the parent tree." To Macdonald such views savored almost of treason.

Sir John had a vision of empire which made little appeal to Sir Wilfrid. The Macdonald vision was both Canadian and imperial; the Laurier vision distinctively Canadian. Nevertheless, by his British customs preference and his distinguished representation of his country on several occasions at imperial gatherings in London, Sir Wilfrid fostered the imperial pride of Canadians; and in other ways he was responsible for a national and imperial self-consciousness that was later to prove his own undoing.

#### LAURIER'S DEFEAT IN 1911 AND 1917

Elected in 1896 on a policy which called for sweeping tariff reductions, Sir Wilfrid in office disturbed the protective system very little. His British preference was his only substantial contribution to the cause of free trade.

In 1910 the western farmers were showing signs of restlessness, and to appease them he agreed to the reciprocity pact with Mr. Taft's government. He believed it would be popular, but he failed to reckon with the new national pride of Canadians, for the fostering of which he was himself largely responsible. When Mr. Taft told his countrymen that "Canada was at the parting of the ways" respecting her political future, and commended the reciprocity agreement on the ground that it would make Canada commercially, if not politically, an "adjunct" of the great republic, the doom of Sir Wilfrid's government was sealed.

Sir Robert Borden came into power in 1911, and Sir Wilfrid stepped down from his place of authority to become leader of the opposition. It is believed that he was anxious to retire, but a Liberal party without the magic figure of Laurier at its head

seemed unthinkable to his followers. None could discover an Elisha upon whom the mantle of the great prophet of Liberalism might fitly fall; and Sir Wilfrid held to his post.

Then came the great war. Sir Robert Borden had been one of the few statesmen to see clearly the menace of German ambition. In December, 1912, he had proposed the building of three dreadnoughts for Canada, to be loaned to the Grand Fleet as Canada's contribution to the naval defense of the empire. Sir Wilfrid fought the measure as an encroachment upon that Canadian autonomy which he had always guarded so jealously, and his majority in the Senate killed the bill.

Little more than a year later war broke out, and political battles were forgotten for the time. Sir Wilfrid, in those early months, supported all government measures.

The story of the failure of his province to supply recruits to the Canadian army, and the consequent breakdown of the voluntary system, is so well known that it need not be recounted here. Neither is it necessary to dwell upon the greatest mistake of Sir Wilfrid's long and illustrious political career—his refusal of the offer to join Sir Robert Borden in a coalition government to enforce the only policy by which Canada's honor could be kept untarnished. In the final test, he chose to stand with his province and his race rather than with his country and empire; he chose the provincial rather than the national view-point, and thereby wrecked the historic Liberal party and tarnished his own fair fame.

The shock to his followers throughout all of Canada, save Quebec, was a severe one. It is the literal truth that strong men wept to find their idolized leader taking a stand upon this all-important question which they could not support.

It may be said of Sir Wilfrid, as it was said by a Canadian writer of Sir John Macdonald, that his "real old guard were not the men who stood with him at Ottawa, but the greater old guard who stood and fought for him in every township, year after year, and to whom a call by name or a nod of the head was all the recompense they got, and yet the recompense they most prized."

It was hard for Laurier's old guard to part from the leader they loved; but to their credit be it said that they voted against him almost *en masse*.

Sir Wilfrid's mistake of 1917 is the tragedy of Canada's political history; but in their sorrow for the loss of the chieftain who for more than thirty years was the idolized leader of a great party, Canadians do not care to dwell upon it to-day.

#### THE CAREER OF SIR ROBERT BORDEN

Sir Robert Borden is a Nova Scotian, born in the picturesque hamlet of Grand Pré, immortalized in Longfellow's "Evangeline." He comes from the little province down by the sea where so many Canadian statesmen are bred. Of eight Canadian premiers, Nova Scotia has given the Dominion three, besides a host of other leaders who rank almost equally high in Canadian history.

Borden was first elected to Parliament in 1896, the year of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's earliest triumph and of the downfall of the Conservative party, which, with one short break, had controlled Canada since confederation. Within four years he was chosen as national leader of his party and assigned to the thankless task of opposing the seemingly invincible Sir Wilfrid in the heyday of his power.

Lacking the winning personality of Macdonald and Laurier, without his great opponent's powers of eloquence, Borden succeeded, nevertheless, in impressing his countrymen with his statesmanlike abilities. He made friends slowly, but he kept those that he made. Slowly but steadily he gained the confidence of Canada. But it was one thing to gain the confidence and respect, even the affection and admiration, of a majority of Canadian voters; it was another thing to win an election. Governments usually have long lives in Canada. Eventually they defeat themselves; oppositions have little to do with their downfall. And Sir Wilfrid was as astute as Sir John had ever been, and equally popular.

Borden's opportunity came along at last in 1911. With the able but unconscious assistance of Mr. Taft and Mr. Champ Clark, Sir Wilfrid defeated himself by his advocacy of reciprocity. He had lost sight of, or perhaps had never really seen, the Canadian vision of Sir John Macdonald; and his lack of that vision cost him an overwhelming and totally unexpected defeat.

The problems with which Sir Robert Borden has had to deal during the world-troubled years of his administration were not the problems in the solving of which



Macdonald and Laurier had earned enduring fame. The shadows of the great war were gathering during the first three years of his premiership, and Sir Robert Borden was one of the few to see them. Investigations which he made in Europe in the autumn of 1912 convinced him of the reality of the German menace. Reference has already been made to his proposal, in December of that year, for the building of three dreadnoughts.

To-day, while the clouds are heavy and we hear the booming of the distant thunder and see the lightning-flashes above the horizon, we cannot and we will not wait until the impending storm bursts upon us in fury and with disaster.

It was with these words that he introduced what was intended only as an emergency policy—his permanent plan, undoubtedly, was for a Canadian naval unit, but he believed that there was no time then to work it out.

His opponents would not have it so. There was no immediate danger, they declared. Sir Wilfrid even expressed the opinion—which he was later to repent most bitterly—that the best guarantee of peace was the peace-loving Kaiser Wilhelm. The question became a party football. It was impossible for Sir Robert to impress even his party supporters with his own views of the seriousness of the situation; a hostile majority in the Senate killed the bill after it had passed the Commons, and nothing was done.

But when war came, in 1914, Canadians remembered the warnings of their premier and responded whole-heartedly to his leadership—as they perhaps might not have responded but for that remembrance. There was not an instant's hesitation on the premier's part. Canada's cabled offer of assistance to the very uttermost was the first to reach London from the Dominions beyond the seas. It was sent two days before the declaration of war.

#### CANADA IN THE WORLD WAR

It is not for a Canadian writer to dilate upon Canadian achievements through those four years of testing, during which the nations were tried by the fires of world war. In the many generous tributes paid by British and American writers and speakers will be found more than all that need be said. But if it be true of Canadians in Flanders, in France, and at home, that they climbed with steadfast courage from one

dark mountain peak of sacrifice to another, and yet to another still higher, it is likewise true that they were able to do so because in Sir Robert Borden they had a strong and trusted leader to show them the way.

No public man ever escapes criticism, just and unjust; but of the great mass of Canadians it was true that they leaned upon the rugged strength of their silent premier and gained fresh courage from his steadfast and inflexible purpose that Canadian effort should not falter.

When the time came that conscription by selective draft was plainly the only means by which Canadian honor could be kept untarnished, the premier did not hesitate. Upon that issue he could have appealed to the patriotic sentiment of the country as the head of his historic party, and could have gained an overwhelming party triumph. He believed, however, that greater unity of Canadian effort could be obtained through the formation of a union government, in which equal representation would be given to those Liberals who were prepared to support his win-the-war policy. To gain that end, he was willing himself to stand aside from the premiership and serve under another leader; but there was no other man under whom the two parties could unite.

Union government was Sir Robert's greatest achievement. His unselfish course—he disrupted his own party thereby—appealed to the imaginations of his fellow countrymen, and solidified opinion in support of vigorous war measures. The Canadian armies were adequately reenforced, Canada stayed in the war effectively to the end, and on the morning of November 11, 1918, the Canadian troops were in Mons, where the "Old Contemptibles" had made their first heroic stand on August 23, 1914.

If space permitted, extended reference should be made to the important contributions which Sir Robert has made to the working out of a new constitution for the British Empire. It will perhaps be sufficient to say that he had an important part in securing for the British Dominions overseas representation in the imperial cabinet, which controls the foreign policy of the whole empire, and that he insisted upon and obtained representation of the Dominions at the peace conference. He has never lost sight of his goal—the due representation of the British Dominions overseas in the control of the common affairs of empire.

# Children on the Stage

A FAMOUS MANAGER POINTS OUT THEIR GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE DRAMA,  
DESCRIBES THE CARE AND TRAINING THEY RECEIVE, AND DISCUSSES  
THE LAWS DESIGNED TO SAFEGUARD THEM

By David Belasco

NOT long ago a woman called on me at my studio in the Belasco Theater in a state of mingled enthusiasm and anxiety. I am not unaccustomed to that frame of mind among persons with ambitions to set out on a stage career who ask my advice, or among the more confident candidates who come by the scores to seek an outlet for their real or fancied talents in my productions.

From this woman's manner I felt sure that she must belong to one or the other of the classes, so I was not a little surprised when she explained that she had come to consult me about her child, a little girl ten years old. There was novelty in the purpose of her call, and I at once became interested.

With whatever show of modesty she could assume, she said that she was the proud mother of a real prodigy. Her precocious child had developed remarkable ability in reciting. It could memorize long passages from plays without difficulty. More than that, it could perform the characters with all the fervor of a grown-up actor. If I recall correctly, stretches from "Romeo and Juliet" and "As You Like It" were in the youngster's repertory, not to mention many scenes from modern published plays.

Should such a gift be allowed to remain unutilized? Ought not a place on the stage to be found at once for this ten-year-old phenomenon? These were the questions I was expected to answer.

I first asked the woman if she had the means of supporting and the facilities for training her daughter as a child in ordinary circumstances is supported and trained. She replied very positively that she had. I then inquired whether its gift was an inherited proclivity. She said she did not

think so, for no one in her family had ever been connected with the theater. In answer to questions regarding the child's physical condition, she said that it had always been in the best of health.

I promptly advised this mother to put aside all thought of a juvenile theatrical career for her little girl. I earnestly urged her to encourage its interest in dolls and children's games, and to take care not to force its education because of its precocity. If, I suggested, its talents for reciting and acting still continued when it had reached the age of sixteen or seventeen—which secretly I had reason to doubt—there still would be time enough to develop them for use in the theater.

The woman was plainly disappointed, and she left my studio unconvinced by what I told her. I later heard that she said Mr. Belasco had warned her that the stage was not a fit place for children, and had strongly advised her to keep her little girl away from it.

That, I hasten to say, is not at all the impression I intended to give her. I was offering advice which applied only in an individual case, based on what seemed to me to be the relative advantages open to this child in its home and on the stage. She had completely misunderstood my meaning—of course, to the disparagement of the theater.

The difficult question of the child in its relation to the professional stage, which was so important to this mother, is much more important to the child, but in a different way. We who are in and of the theater know that it can arrive at its best results only when it meets and solves wisely the artistic and economic problems which it creates. There are also social problems in the theater which are raised by the peo-

ple associated with it. They may safely be left to the mature members of the dramatic profession whom they directly affect; but there always remains the puzzling question of what is best for the child actor, who cannot think for himself or herself, and who, therefore, must be subject to conditions which he or she cannot change or control.

One way to settle the question—the narrow and arbitrary way that is likely to occur first to those who consider it from a single point of view—would be to eliminate children entirely from the acting profession. That would be the way of persons who know nothing of the theater from the inside, or of the actual conditions which surround the child actor.

If it were the right way, it would have been accomplished long ago, for the child that works in any profession or trade has never been without aggressive guardians of its welfare. On the contrary, a child's right to appear on the stage, under proper conditions and restrictions, has generally been conceded, and those who know most about its work and the influences around it agree that, relatively, it is better off in the theater than under the conditions and influences from which more than ninety per cent of young stage children are drawn. I am making a sharp distinction, of course, between children who appear in legitimate plays and those engaged in such hazardous or exhausting work as acrobatic exhibitions or dancing.

#### THE STAGE NEEDS CHILD ACTORS

Although it must be a secondary argument—for the child actor must always be entitled to first consideration on the score of health, morals, and education—the welfare of dramatic art depends to a very considerable degree upon the child performer.

Children are necessary to the stage. It cannot get along without them. Many of the greatest masterpieces of dramatic literature have turned directly upon the presence and effect of little children in their scenes. Throughout the theater's whole history, the play that has been most profound and universal in its appeal has dealt simply with that most enduring and powerful of human instincts—mother-love.

This motive of drama, which remains supreme in contemporary works of the stage, was equally common in the old Greek dramas. The tragic grief of the queen mother in the "Medea" of Euripides could be developed into blinding passion only by the presence of her children, whom she kills to save them from the woman for whom the king has abandoned her.



EFFIE SHANNON, AGED SIX, AS LITTLE EVA IN "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN"

Shakespeare, too, often depended upon child character to give power and beauty to his plays. Among many examples are the rôles of *Prince Arthur* in "King John," the little *Prince of Wales* in "Richard III," and the fairies and sprites in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." "Uncle Tom's Cabin" might not have swayed millions as it did, save for the pathetic character of *Little Eva*. It was the overwhelming motive of mother-love, and the appearance of the two children in its scenes, that made a place in theatrical history for "East Lynne." In my own play, "The Return of Peter Grimm," I was obliged to introduce the character of the little boy, *Willem*, in order to have my audiences comprehend fully the tender, lovable nature of old *Peter*.

Drama that truthfully reflects life requires the use of child actors. Only in plays that view life flippantly and cynically are they persistently ignored. For instance, one does not find child characters in the comedies of George Bernard Shaw.

Yet it is not safe to argue, because the child actor is necessary to the theater, that the theater is necessary to the child. It surely is not necessary, and offers no benefit, to the child who has the ordinary advantages of comfortable home surroundings and careful parental discipline.

I am by no means certain, even when a child shows a precocious gift for acting, that to place it in the theater at a tender age is the best way to develop its character or cultivate its talents for future use. My own way would be to supervise with greatest care its health and education under domestic influences, and then to give it a later start on the stage. If I had a child, and it wanted to go into the theater, I would question only my ability to support and train it in the home.

I do not want my views on this subject to be misunderstood. They do not imply that I consider the theater an improper place for a very large percentage of the hundreds of children who at all times are in it. The question depends altogether on what advantages the child would have received if it had remained in its home.

A distinction should also be drawn between children who come of parents belonging to the acting profession and those who are brought into the theater from other classes and walks of life. In the case of the first, they are subject to the same influences that they would probably find at

home. They are also under the care of their natural guardians, who presumably have decided what is best for them.

In this country children on the stage who belong to theatrical families are not very numerous—at least, there are not enough of them to influence any general conclusions on the problem of the stage child. In this respect our native branch of the dramatic profession is radically different from the English, where for generations acting has been followed as a family profession.

#### CHILD ACTORS WHO HAVE WON FAME

Nevertheless, there are a few conspicuous examples in our theater of actors' children who have been on the stage almost from infancy and have remained there all their lives, some to win distinction in their mature years. Consider what the stage would have lost if the right to it had been denied Maude Adams. She was carried on at the age of seven months by her mother in "The Lost Child," and had developed genuine talent before she could speak her lines without a lisp.

Fritz Williams, also of stage parents, was only six months old when he was before the footlights of a Boston theater in "Seeing Warren." Wallace Eddinger, who was to become a famous *Cedric* in "Little Lord Fauntleroy," was a child actor at the age of seven years in a piece called "Among the Pines." George M. Cohan, now one of the real geniuses of the American theater, first appeared at the age of ten in "Peck's Bad Boy."

William Collier, one of the best and cleverest of our farcical stars, began when he was only one year older. Holbrook Blinn was six when he was a boy actor in "The Streets of London," though his actress mother wisely took him out of the theater and gave him a college education. Harry Warner was seven years old when his celebrated father permitted him to play a child's rôle, also in "The Streets of London."

Fay Templeton, at three, was a *Cupid* in a spectacular play, and a year later was *Puck* in a New York production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Maude Fealy began at three, and Phyllis Rankin at ten—both under the guidance of their parents. But the talented children of the Drews, the Barrymores, and the Jeffersons—the most noted professional families we





A SCENE FROM "LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY," A PLAY IN WHICH SEVERAL NOTED CHILD ACTORS HAVE APPEARED—THIS PICTURE SHOWS VIVIAN MARTIN AS THE LITTLE LORD, WITH CHRYSYAL HERNE AS MRS. ERROL AND FRANCIS MILLER AS THE GROOM

*From a photograph by Byron, New York*

have in the American theater—like the Irvings in England, were kept off the stage until their education had been acquired.

These child actors I have named gravitated naturally to the theater because their parents were members of its profession. Among our grown actors of repute there are some who also began as children, but without inherited ability for the art.

Notable among them is Lotta Crabtree, now retired, who was acting at eleven in

California during the gold days. Mrs. Fiske has been in the theater practically all her life. At three she was the infant *Duke of York* in "Richard III"; at ten she was acting with J. K. Emmet, at Wallack's in New York, as *Little Fritz*, in "Fritz, Our German Cousin." She appeared in an astonishing number of children's rôles, and was a full-fledged star in "Fogg's Ferry" at seventeen.

Louis Mann, the popular dialect star, also saw the footlights at three. Julia Marlowe began at twelve, but was taken off the stage to undergo arduous private training before she emerged as a star of poetic drama at seventeen. Clara Morris, one of the greatest emotional stars our stage has produced, appeared at thirteen in "The Seven Sisters," in Cleveland, though it was eleven years later that she found her métier as *Anne Sylvester* in "Men and Women," under Augustin Daly, at the old Fifth Avenue Theater.

Annie Russell acted at eight. She was one of the innumerable children who have appeared in "Miss Multon," which is a version of "East Lynne." Elsie Janis, exceedingly talented as an entertainer along vaudeville lines, began in my own play, "The Charity Ball," at the tender age of eight. Edna May was lisping to audiences at five, but in amateur theatricals. Effie Shannon was a child actress in companies controlled by the Boston manager, John Stetson.

Henry E. Dixey, at ten, was the boy *Peanuts*, in Augustin Daly's play, "Under the Gaslights," during its Boston run at the old Howard Athenæum. Ada Rehan, for whom future fame was waiting, first played at fourteen in "Across the Continent," one of the popular melodramas of its day. Julia Arthur, also at fourteen, was another of the many children who made a beginning as the little *Prince of Wales* in "Richard III."

I have not attempted to make a complete list of the actors and actresses, now familiar to our play-going public, who began their stage work in infancy or in very early childhood. A careful search would



MAUDE ADAMS AS A CHILD ACTRESS—SHE FIRST APPEARED ON THE STAGE AS A BABY IN HER MOTHER'S ARMS

doubtless discover a good many more than I have named; yet even in their aggregate they would form a very small fraction of the whole present membership of our stage profession. They are the fortunate ones—the comparatively few exceptions among almost

who are capable of bringing them up under the advantages normally found in the domestic circle should not be accepted as applying to the very great majority of the child actors who everywhere amuse us and appeal to our hearts.



GEORGE M. COHAN AS A BOY ACTOR—HE FIRST APPEARED AT THE AGE OF TEN  
IN "PECK'S BAD BOY"

*From a photograph by Hall, New York*

innumerable child actors who have attracted no special attention, earned no distinction, and eventually dropped out of sight, to be heard of no more.

#### HOW CHILD ACTORS ARE CARED FOR

My opinion that the theater is not an advisable place for the children of parents

These children almost invariably come from a very humble class. Except in the occasional instances when their parents belong to the theatrical profession, we never get the children of affluence, or even of the modestly well-to-do. They are of the lowliest origin—little dependents of a crippled father, or of a widowed mother who has

had to turn to scrubbing as a precarious support for her family. Perhaps they are orphans who have been left in half neglect while an older brother or sister is away from home at work.

The employment of such a child as this—even if, in the case of an infant, it is carried on and off the stage only once or twice during a performance—may enable a mother to support a family of five or six in fair comfort. If it happens to be a little older, the hour or two it spends in the theater, at work which to it does not seem like work, is infinitely less harmful than the time it would otherwise have to spend in a dirty tenement, an ill-ventilated sweatshop, or, perhaps, unlooked after in the streets.

Such children are paid from twenty-five to seventy-five dollars a week. They very seldom receive less than the first sum. So it may be seen that they are able to earn from three to seven times more than their parent. They must be kept clean and well-fed. Often they are brought, for the first time in their little lives, under the influence of the gospel of soap, water, and sunshine.

It has been my experience that they improve at once under the changed conditions which the theater offers them. Everything is furnished for them. In many instances even their food is provided. They are never left to their own resources, for the parent or guardian is expected to be constantly on hand to look after them. When a play goes on the road, it is always made possible for the person in charge of the child to earn her expenses by securing employment as maid to one of the actresses in the company.

I know there is sometimes an impression that children on the stage, like *Toby Tyler*, who ran away with the circus in the old story, are pathetic victims of neglect. The exact opposite is more likely to be the case. They run greater danger of being spoiled by too much attention and petting. Selfish motives, without reference to humane considerations, dictate that a manager should carefully safeguard the child who happens to be in his company, for in its welfare lies his own material advantage.

A little child is always a good influence in a theatrical company. It becomes at once an object of general interest and solicitude, the more so because actors and actresses, as a rule, live lonely lives. Its effect is to improve the tone of the organi-

zation, for all men and women are sure to be careful in its presence. I know of no more effectual check upon the deportment of people behind the scenes than the thought that they are being watched by a child's wide-open, wondering eyes. Our tiny players may sometimes be a source of a good deal of trouble to us of the stage, but in this respect they furnish substantial compensation.

What I have been discussing applies to children who are still in their infancy—that is, children under eight or ten years of age. They come to us out of the nowhere, and seldom remain in the theater more than a season or two. In the case of little boys and girls beyond that age, the problem of the child actor becomes more difficult, for then the question of discipline and education enters.

But again we must bear in mind the conditions which a child of very humble origin finds in the theater, and what that same child would be likely to encounter outside it. A theater-manager cannot be expected to superintend the education of the children whom he employs in his company. The most that can be asked of him is that he regulate their hours of rehearsal—their regular performances are an arbitrary matter—so that they will have reasonable time for study and play.

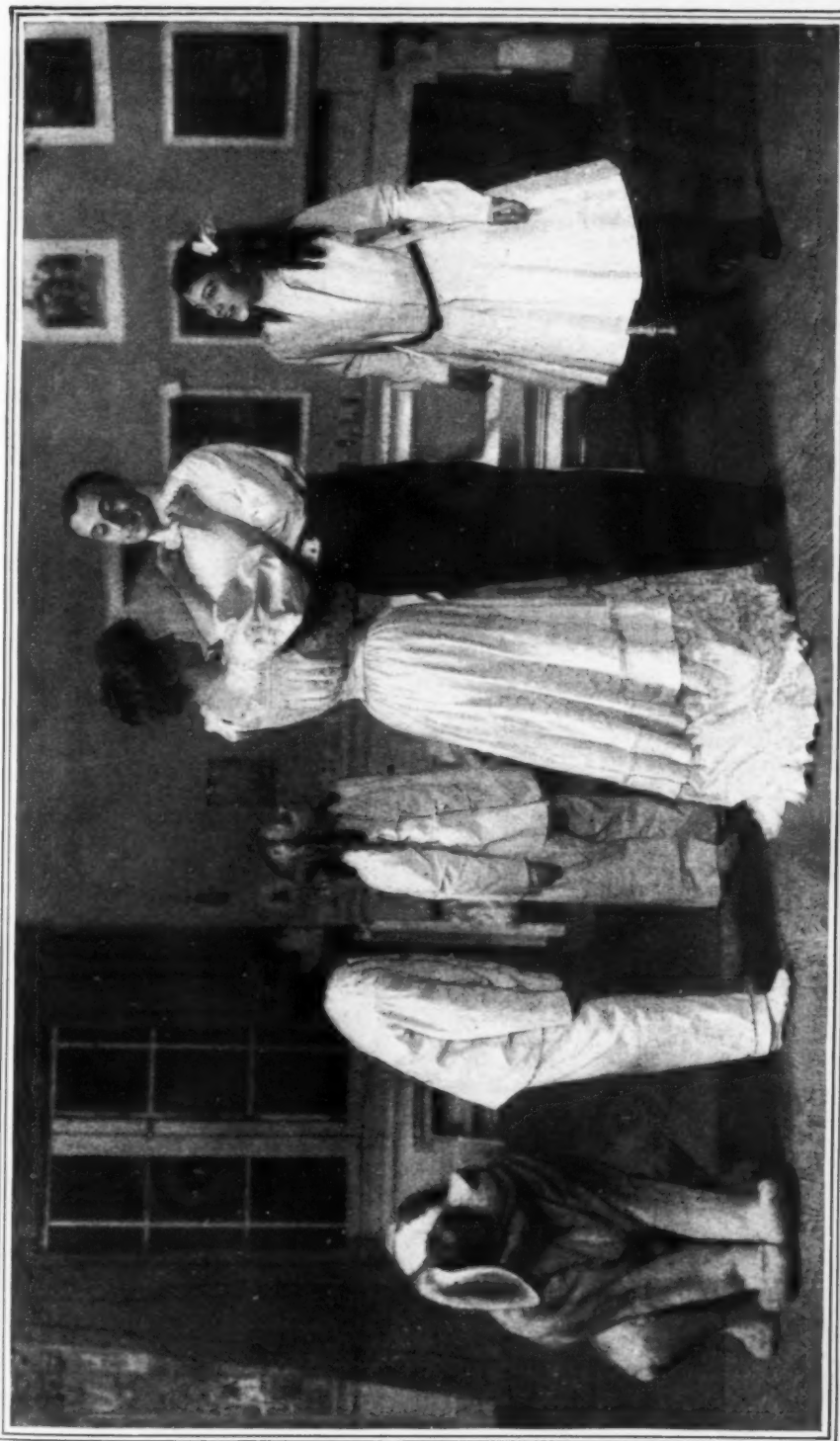
The working hours—except during the period of preliminary rehearsals—are, I may say, never long, and the work itself is more like play to a child. It loves to rehearse and to act. In fact, I have never known a child to become tired of playing its part, and I have found that it is less likely than grown actors to become careless or inattentive. The severest reproof that can be given to a child actor is to deprive it of its rôle for a night or two.

There is, as a rule, ample time for a child in a theatrical company, except on Wednesday—the established mid-week matinée day—to attend to study, provided the proper discipline is exercised by its parent or by the person who happens to have it in charge. If the parent is lax in these matters of discipline, the child would be just as badly off if it were not in the theater.

#### DISCREPANCIES OF STATE LAWS

Each State has its laws which regulate the employment and dictate the education of children, and, especially in the case of the child actor, these laws are rigidly enforced.





A SCENE FROM "PETER PAN," ANOTHER PLAY IN WHICH CHILD ACTORS HAD IMPORTANT PARTS—ON THE RIGHT IS MILDRED MORRIS AS WENDY, AND NEXT TO HER ARE ERNEST LAWFORD AND GRACE HENDERSON AS MR. AND MRS. DARLING

*From a photograph by Hall, New York*

I would not want to be understood as objecting to any regulation which wisely operates in the interest of children, especially children who for one reason or another have been deprived of the protection and guidance of parents; and I do not believe that such regulations are opposed by responsible theatrical managers, all of whom must be aware of the social problem created by the stage child. But when account is taken of the thousands of ragged, ill-fed, and almost abandoned children who by day and night swarm in the streets of every large city, I am led to the belief that some of our authorities and charitable societies are unduly

solicitous concerning the welfare of children who find clean and pleasant employment in our theaters.

Many a time I have watched the grimy little merchants who swarm around the back doors of the big newspaper-offices late at night, often in the bitter cold or in heavy rain, waiting for the bundles of papers from which they can make, at the very best, a profit of about a dollar. I have wondered who feeds them, who washes them, who cares when they come home. Then I have contrasted these poor little fellows with the clean, well-fed children who come and go through the stage entrance of a theater, and



WALLACE EDDINGER, A BOY ACTOR WHO WAS ONE OF THE NUMEROUS FAUNTLEEROYS—  
THIS PICTURE SHOWS HIM IN "THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER"



ELSIE LESLIE, WHO AS A LITTLE GIRL WAS THE MOST FAMOUS OF ALL THE FAUNTLEEROYS

I have never hesitated in my opinion as to which are the better off.

It should not be forgotten that these two groups of children come from pretty much the same class. Have those who object on principle to the employment of children on the stage ever walked late in the evening through one of the streets of New York's lower East Side, with its dense masses of juvenile humanity? I wonder!

If the laws which affect the employment of children on the stage were made uniform in the various States, great advantages would follow both for the children and the theatrical manager. Certain States, such as Massachusetts, Illinois, Maryland, and Ohio, have very drastic regulations. They prohibit the appearance on the public stage of any child under the age of sixteen. Other States, such as New York, Pennsylvania, and many more, allow children to appear in plays, but with restrictions as to work that might be physically injurious.

Presumably the authorities in all these States have made careful investigation before writing on their statute-books the laws which govern the work of professional chil-

dren. If so, is it more harmful to a child to appear in the theater in Massachusetts or Illinois than in the State of New York? And why?

I do not think any theatrical manager would argue for laxity in the laws which safeguard the well-being of child actors; but all managers would prefer to have such laws standardized. A dramatic production is a delicate work of art, which is brought to perfection only after infinite thought, care, and preparation. The various elements which compose it cannot be changed without throwing its intricate machinery out of gear. All plays are eventually sent on tour, and, once having conformed to the laws of the State in which they are produced, to alter them to suit the changing requirements of different localities may often be fatal to their artistic beauty and symmetry, and ruinous to the manager whose skill, labor, and financial investment they represent.

#### THE PROFESSIONAL CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

In New York, where more children employed in the theater are to be found than

in any other city, the question of their schooling is claiming attention, and definite progress in providing it is being made. The Professional Children's School, which is allied with the Rehearsal Club—a self-sustaining institution under the patronage of such responsible people as Bishop Greer, the Rev. Ernest M. Stires, William M. Embree, George H. Hedges, Dr. William S. Thomas, and Mrs. Richard Mansfield, who formed the advisory board for 1918—provides facilities throughout the school year for the instruction of child actors in general studies, and exists under the sanction and authority of the New York Board of Education.

None but children who work in the theater are eligible to its classes. Its pupils are subject to the city's truant laws, and they may be transferred back or forth to corresponding grades in the public schools. Its curriculum is the same that is offered in the regular schools, except that the hours for study and recitations are adapted to the special needs of the children who attend it.

Even when its pupils are absent on long theatrical tours, facilities which enable them to continue their studies are afforded. It also offers annually three scholarships by which apt pupils may continue their education in excellent preparatory academies. So the claim can no longer be made that children employed in the theater are denied educational advantages which are accessible to other children of their age and circumstances.

A considerable number of talented and more or less experienced child actors are always available to the theatrical manager. This is especially true in New York, where

nearly all the important dramatic and musical productions of our native stage are made and have their initial runs. Some stage-directors prefer to employ them because, within limitations, they are accustomed to stage surroundings and know about what is expected of them. As they are more or less regularly before the public,

a manager who is intending to produce a play which requires the use of children can readily find an opportunity to observe their acting in other plays and to decide whether they are suitable to his purposes.

But for my own productions which may happen to contain juvenile characters, I never depend upon these so-called professional children. In my casts I greatly prefer children who have had little or no previous experience on the stage. As in the cases of my grown actors, I am always careful that they should fit, in appearance and, as far as possible, in temperament, the characters which they are to represent.

#### HOW I FIND MY CHILD ACTORS

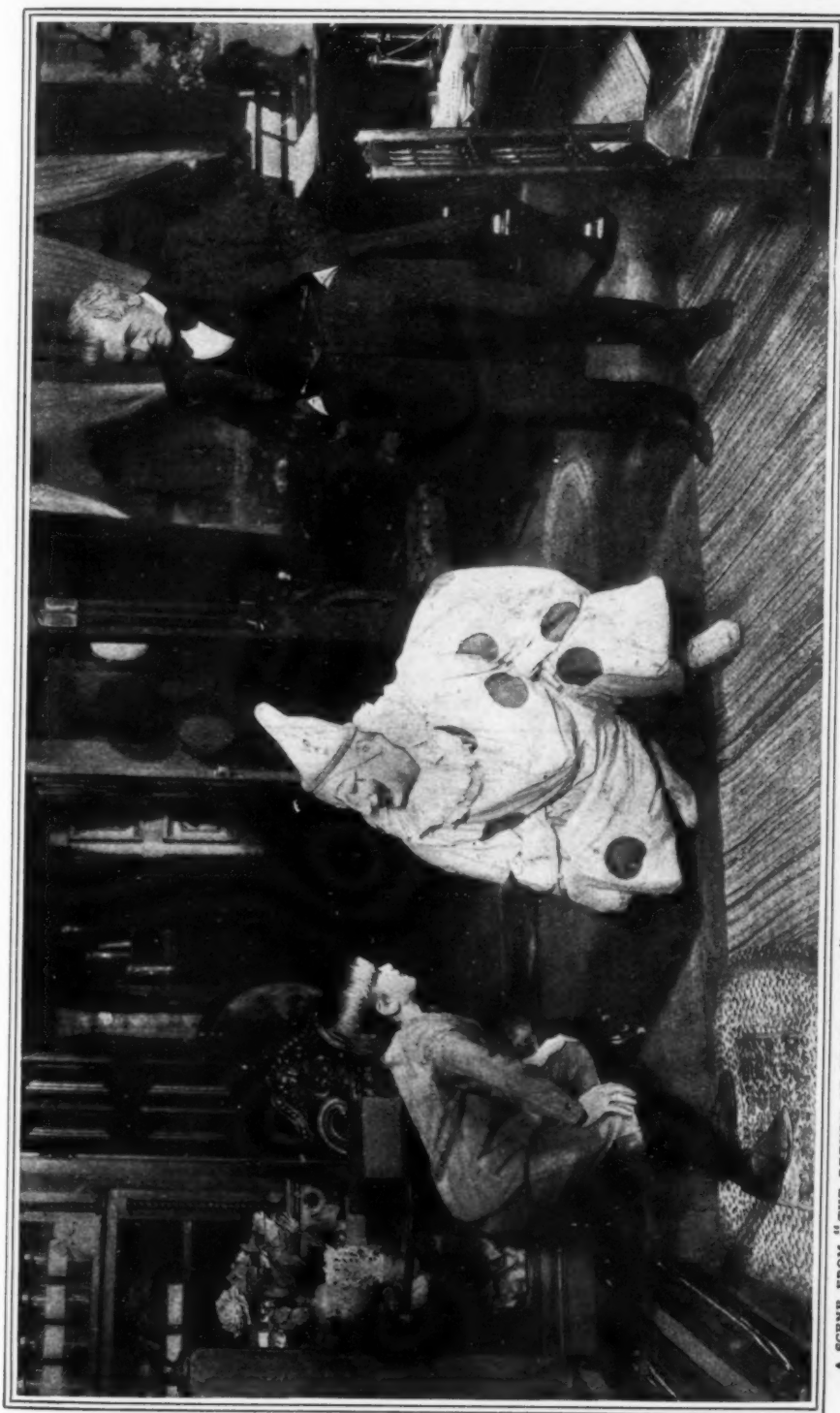
As I make it a rule to plan my productions far ahead, I am ever on the lookout for children of the right type, and I usually find them in the humble levels of city life. I train them according to my own methods, and I quickly discover whether they will be able to understand what they are expected to do.

It does not need a child born in luxury to impersonate a well-to-do child in a play. All little children, even the waifs in the gutter, think in the language and symbols of fairy-land. As there is nothing more interesting than child psychology, so there is nothing more beautiful than a child's im-



PHYLLIS RANKIN AS A CHILD ACTRESS, AT THE AGE OF TWELVE





A SCENE FROM "THE RETURN OF PETER GRIMM," SHOWING PERCY HELTON AS THE BOY WILLEM, TONY BEVAN AS THE CLOWN, AND DAVID WARFIELD AS PETER GRIMM. MR. BELASCO CALLS PERCY HELTON "A LITTLE ACTOR OF AMAZING SKILL AND APPEAL."

*From a photograph by White, New York*

agination, and it is upon these elements that I try to work.

In this way I avoid what to me is the most exasperating thing in the theater—the child who is conscious of its own precocity. The great trouble with children who appear with any considerable degree of regularity on the stage is that they have been pampered and overcoached until they have lost all their naturalness. They do not really understand what they do, but go through certain actions and speak certain lines because they have been told to.

The result is that they fall into the habit of moving about like little automatons; and this fatal fault, once having been acquired, can never be eradicated. It is due largely to the fact that they have been too much under the influence of a "stage mother," or of a director who is content to be only a coach. They become superficial and artificial, and the puppet-strings are always visible in their acting.

These are some of the reasons why I always advise against putting a child on the stage at an early age, even when it has shown a precocious talent for acting, or when it is the ambition of its parents to have it choose the theater as a life profession. Many children recite well, or develop early ability in memorizing and acting, and the natural pride of their mothers and fathers puts the stage in their minds; but if children have great natural talent it should be left alone. When it is subjected to too much coaching, it disappears, and generally it does not return.

Furthermore, the fact that a little child acts well on the stage gives no reason for belief that it will act equally well when it grows up. Even if it has the advantage of the most skilful training, there comes a time when it loses the pretty manner which, as a child, made it so interesting and attractive. The treble of its little voice, so delightful to the ear, begins to change to uncertain notes. It becomes awkward in the use of its hands and feet. It begins to be self-conscious and constrained in its movements.

It outgrows the child characters it has played, just as it outgrows its costumes and the sentiments which the characters are introduced to express. For a time nothing is left for it to put in the place of these things. It is now in the transition state between childhood and young maturity which must come to every child. If this child had been

kept out of the theater altogether, if it had been prevented from accumulating the ingrained mannerisms and artificial ways that are common to almost all stage children, it would have a much better chance of becoming a good actor in later life.

During my thirty-five years in the theater I have come across a good many children who have afterward developed into actors of high attainments, but they have been the exceptions to the rule. I have also had, at times, very precocious children in my various companies. Little Percy Helton, for instance, who acted the character of *Willem* in "The Return of Peter Grimm," was a child of remarkable intelligence and adaptability and a little actor of amazing skill and appeal.

But I have never exploited a child solely on account of its precocity. When I have presented children on my stages—which I have frequently done and will continue to do—it has been because of the requirements forced upon me by the plays in which they have appeared, and not because of the children themselves.

#### MASTER BETTY, THE INFANT ROSCIUS

A discussion of the problem of the child actor must not fail to take into account the case of Master Betty, the most remarkable example of juvenile precocity that the English-speaking theater—in fact, the theater of the whole world—has ever known.

This amazing prodigy, whose meteoric career came in the first years of the last century, was born near Shrewsbury, in 1791, but most of his childhood was spent in Belfast. His mental attainments seem to have been inherited from his mother, but neither of his parents was connected with the theater. Before he was able to read he had learned to recite, and could memorize long speeches from Shakespeare's plays, which he delivered with keen sense of character and accompanied with appropriate action. As he grew older, his remarkable gift was trained until, fearing that he might be led to choose a theatrical career, his parents began to discourage his love for acting, and he was sent away to school.

When Master Betty was eleven years old the great Mrs. Siddons paid a professional visit to Belfast, and the boy, who was home from school, was taken to see her in the part of *Elvira* in "Pizarro." Instantly his infatuation for acting flamed up again.



DAVID BELASCO AND CHILD ACTORS OF HIS COMPANY—"HAVING FOUND THE RIGHT CHILDREN FOR MY PURPOSES, THE NEXT IMPORTANT STEP IS TO BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH THEM"

*From a photograph by White, New York*

After a sleepless night he stole out of the house, bought a copy of "Pizarro," and had committed all of *Elvira's* speeches to memory before evening.

Fearing that further interference with his passionate desire to act would injure his health, Master Betty's father took him to a Belfast theatrical manager, who heard him recite, and, declaring that he was an infant Garrick, offered him half the receipts of the house if he would appear in the Belfast Theater. So it came about that in 1803, at the age of twelve, he made his first public appearance in the tragedy of "Zara."

The boy's genius electrified Belfast, and Dublin soon insisted upon seeing him. Here he was publicly lauded and privately fêted, and then Cork demanded a chance to worship him. By this time he was acting in farce as well as in tragedy, and gradually accumulating a repertory of plays.

Next he invaded Scotland. At Glasgow and Edinburgh, where his fame had preceded him, the theaters were not large enough to hold the clamoring crowds. London heard of the "infant Roscius" who was amazing the provinces, and Drury Lane and Covent Garden competed to secure him. The sums they offered were the

largest that had ever been paid to an actor. John Philip Kemble was then receiving the equivalent of two hundred dollars a week, but the proprietors of Covent Garden were willing to give Master Betty more than that for a single night.

The upshot was that Covent Garden and Drury Lane agreed to share his services, and in December, 1804, at the age of thirteen, Master Betty appeared at the former theater as *Achmet* in "Barbarossa." The chronicles of the times tell how the audience began to gather as early as ten o'clock in the morning, and had jammed the house by four in the afternoon. The Prince of Wales, afterward George IV, was in attendance, and the boxes were filled with the social and artistic élite of the town.

After six nights of delirious adulation the prodigy was transferred to Drury Lane, where the public burst down the doors and balustrades to get in. Royalty fêted him, and the wealthy bestowed presents upon him which mounted into fortunes. Gentleman Smith, the original *Charles Surface* in "The School for Scandal," who had retired from the stage sixteen years before, gave the boy a seal cut in the likeness of David Garrick, which the great tragedian had presented to Smith with the injunction not to give it away until an actor had risen who was worthy of the gift.

This frenzy of the London public continued for two years. It reached its climax when Pitt adjourned the House of Commons in order that its members might witness Master Betty in a performance of "Hamlet." By 1807 the furor had subsided, and people began to suspect that the critics, whom they had driven from the town for doubting the depth and fiber of the prodigy's powers, may have been right. In 1808 young Betty entered Cambridge University, and a subsequent attempt to resume his theatrical career was a failure. As a boy, he is said to have learned the entire rôle of *Hamlet* in three hours; as a man he had not a particle of his infantile genius left.

Let his peculiar talent be analyzed, and it will be found that he was a master of words, but not of ideas. No doubt he could play prettily; but once the prettiness of childhood had disappeared, he found it a very different thing to act with the mastery of great art. Here lies eternally the stumbling-block in the path of the child actor.

The descent of the youthful prodigies of our American stage has not been as precipitous as Master Betty's, because they have not soared to such exalted heights. But every father or mother whose young hopeful has distinguished himself as an actor in childhood should bear in mind the fate of this earlier infant phenomenon before planning a brilliant histrionic career for him.

#### JUVENILE "PINAFORE" COMPANIES

At a former time in our native theater there were several avenues for the entrance of clever children on the stage that we do not have now. One of the most prolific of these was the epidemic of child "Pinafore" companies which spread over the country in the early eighties of last century. The great success of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, both in London and New York, suggested to some manager the idea of presenting it with a cast of children, and for a number of years such organizations were to be found everywhere.

A number of our present actors obtained their first experience in this way. Julia Marlowe's genius might not have been detected if R. E. J. Miles, in Cincinnati, in 1879, had not cast for the rôle of *Sir Joseph Porter* a little girl of twelve who was then known as Sarah Frost. But in her case, as I have said before, it was long training outside the theater that developed the great ability she afterward displayed.

In the same year Mrs. Fiske, as little Minnie Maddern, was showing talent, which has since become so conspicuous, as one of the numerous *Ralph Rackstraws*. Fritz Williams sang *Sir Joseph Porter* at fourteen; at the same age Annie Russell was one of the sisterhood of diminutive *Josephines*. Fay Templeton was a *Rackstraw* in 1880, and Annie Sutherland appeared as *Little Buttercup* among the children who gave a season of "Pinafore" at Haverly's Chicago Theater. William Collier, at eleven, was singing in the same operetta, and others whose first appearances in public came about in this way are Grace Filkins, Harry Woodruff, and Edna May—the last, of course, at a much later date.

Managers who did not know how to drill children for stage rôles, or who did not care to do so, found in these "Pinafore" companies a great reservoir on which they could readily draw. Child actors were more needed then than now, perhaps, for it was the





FIRST STEPS IN THE TRAINING OF CHILD ACTORS—"FOR A TIME I ROMP WITH THE CHILDREN WITHOUT MENTIONING THE WORK THEY ARE TO DO"

*From a photograph by White, New York*

period in which intense emotional acting was popular, and eminent stars, who were in the ascendent, were in the habit of securing their most poignant effects with the aid of children in the scenes.

The child actor was necessary to Clara Morris, as was proved by her performances in "Miss Multon" and other emotional dramas in which she appeared. The same

applies to Mme. Janauschek. Joseph Jefferson, J. K. Emmet, and, in later years, James A. Herne, are other actors who were always at their best with little children as foils.

There are three plays which have left an imprint on the native theater, all of which were conspicuous for the number of children who at various times have appeared

in them. A count of the child actors who have impersonated *Little Eva* in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and of those in "Little Lord Fauntleroy" and "Editha's Burglar"—with which Elsie Leslie's name is best associated—would show a legion of them.

#### TRAINING BOY AND GIRL ACTORS

Some of the most interesting experiences I have ever had in the theater have come out of the training of children for my productions, and the process of their training has involved much of the most important and perplexing work I have done. To teach a little girl or boy to act in the stereotyped manner of most stage children is not difficult; but to drill a child actually to impersonate character is a very different matter. It demands special faculties, not the least of which are infinite patience and great persistence.

When I am about to produce a play requiring children, I have several of the right ages and types brought before me. I am careful to inquire, first of all, as to the motive of the parents in offering their children for employment. If I find among them a "stage mother" who has deluded herself into believing that her child is a genius who will control the fate of any play in which it appears, that child is very certain not to be engaged by me. I explain to a mother that I shall expect her to give the child every possible attention when it is not actually on the stage, but that every detail of its drill must be left to me.

Having found the right children for my purposes, the next important step is to become acquainted with them. It is fatal to the child's success if the stage-director first approaches it as a master. When it is inclined to fear its teacher, or becomes constrained and embarrassed in his presence, it will never learn to act with freedom or naturalness.

So I sometimes spend hours in the process of getting acquainted. At the Belasco Theater in New York there is a large rehearsal-room, which can be turned into an excellent play-room, and I have it fixed up with toys, so that it will attract a child's interest. During my recent production of "Daddies," in which there are five little children orphaned by the war, this room became much more a nursery than a rehearsal-room.

For a time I romp with the children without mentioning the work they are to do.

This time—it may be several hours, or even days—I do not consider wasted. I am getting the children to know me and to gain confidence in me. At the same time I am minutely observing them, studying their temperaments and natures and manners, and deciding what is the best way to mold them to my needs.

We often have luncheon and dinner together, talking about everything that appeals to a child's fancy, and gradually getting on familiar terms. Meanwhile my costume-designers are also studying them and deciding what will be most appropriate for them.

It sometimes happens, during this preliminary period of getting acquainted, that I detect faults in a child which I feel I cannot overcome. Some children are superlatively imaginative and nervous; others are superlatively dull and phlegmatic. It is with these two extremes that it is hardest to deal.

At length I have decided as to the adaptability of the child, or children, and then I begin to lead them by degrees into the play in which they are to act.

Some stage-directors make the great mistake of teaching children only the lines which they are expected to speak, and of describing to them only the scenes in which they are to appear. That has never been my way. Instead, I explain the whole play to them. I try to make it appeal to them as a story. I want them to feel that every detail in it is personal to them.

As there is no limit to a bright child's imagination, this is not such a difficult matter as it seems—not even in the case of a very intricate drama. A little child can soon be taught to imagine that it has a father who is in prison, a mother who is ill and in need, or even that it is some one different from its actual self.

When they have fully grasped the story and its meaning, I begin to teach them to go through their parts, either in the rehearsal-room or on the stage. Meanwhile they have been learning, invariably with great rapidity, the lines which they are to speak. I try to make them understand that they must do as I direct; and I caution the grown actors to show no sign of impatience if the little ones do not at first grasp what they are to do. When children are being drilled on my stage, I reserve for myself the sole right to be impatient or severe, and I make a point never to exercise it.



DAVID BELASCO AT LUNCHEON WITH CHILD ACTORS OF HIS COMPANY IN THE REHEARSAL-ROOM AT THE BELASCO THEATER IN NEW YORK—THESE ARE THE FIVE CHILDREN WHO APPEAR IN "DADDIES" AS FRENCH WAR ORPHANS

*From a photograph by White, New York*

I go over sentence after sentence with these little actors, showing them how to combine their movements with what they are saying. Generally I act out their rôles in detail for them, but I am particularly careful to warn them never to mimic me. My purpose is to impress upon them just what is to be done, and then induce them to do it in their own way.

I find that unconsciously they absorb my meaning, and quickly fit themselves into the complications of the play. How quickly this can be accomplished depends not so much upon instructing the child exactly what it is expected to do, but upon enabling it to comprehend the meaning of everything that is happening around it.

All children, of course, cannot be trained alike. In this respect they are not different from experienced adult actors. With some I get my best results by cooing and caressing, and with others by directing and coaxing. Like grown actors, also, I find that some child performers are able to speak their lines most effectively while sitting, and that others can best carry out their intention while standing or moving about. In such matters as these, it is the temperament of the child that decides.

#### CHILDREN NEVER FORGET THEIR LINES

When the date comes for a public performance, the children on my stage are the source of the slightest of my worries. By that time we are on a plane of companionship. I know exactly what they will do. I never fear that they will forget their lines. A bit of stage business may now and then escape their memories, but the lines of their parts they are sure to know.

In fact, by the time the preliminary rehearsals of a play are at an end, it generally happens that the child actors in its cast have perfectly memorized not only all their own dialogue, but also that of the other actors who appear in the scenes with them. Our audiences are very little aware how

often a child actor saves the effect of an entire scene by prompting one of the older actors whose lines, through nervousness or inadvertence, have suddenly left him.

The child always takes its acting seriously. It seldom suffers from fear or embarrassment in the presence of an audience. All that it has to do in a play becomes very real to it, and it loses consciousness of everything that lies beyond the footlights. How naturally it accomplishes its part depends on how free it is of conventional manners which it may have acquired in other plays, and how careful has been the drill that it has undergone for its immediate work.

To those who harbor a belief that the child actor is a poor little bond-slave, placed in the theater before its time to earn a living, I would say that invariably it loves its work and its lot. In one sense it is an unfortunate child—it is less fortunate than well-to-do children in normal domestic circumstances, whose only thought is to breathe and eat and grow up. If the fortunes of all our lives were distributed more equally and more justly among us—especially among our little folk—I would deplore a condition that makes it necessary for any child to earn a living for itself or for others. But if a child must work, the work that it finds in the theater is pleasanter and less likely to do it physical harm than any other that is accessible to it.

The problem of the child actor is one which invites our wisest consideration. That it is a problem, we who are in the theater know only too well. Yet the harshness of the problem is softened when we stop to consider for a moment the attitude of the child actor toward its own work. It is work of which a child never wearies, work which to it seems only play. Does any theatergoer imagine that his own enjoyment of Barrie's "Peter Pan" was greater than that of the child actors who capered in its fanciful scenes?

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#### FANCY

FANCY, in full motley clad,  
 Roams through all seasons, grim or glad;  
 Fleet as the wind o'er sea and land,  
 Free-footed as a gipsy band;  
 To rule or reason disinclined—  
 A dream-born vagrant of the mind.

*William Hamilton Hayne*



# A House Full of Husbands

BY IZOLA FORRESTER

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

OVER Bruce Roberts's flat-topped mahogany desk in the Chalmers-Roberts offices hung a little oblong, brass-framed quotation:

There's a tide in the affairs of men  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.

Bruce had set the alarm-clock of his success by that sentiment. He was an opportunist, a human pointer watching the fall of the bird, as superstitious in his way over omens and signs as ever was Caesar or Saul or the gentleman of the zodiac.

And he had won out. In the eight years since he came back from Buenos Aires he had switched the trend of his life from the trail of adventure to the broad, safe pike of suburban prosperity. He was married and had three children. He owned a ten-room stucco house in the best property section of Caedmon Hills. His car was only last year's model, and his firm was doing finely.

That Thursday night he had caught the five twenty train as usual, had nodded to Kincaid, Riggs, and a few other neighbors from the Hills, and had finally settled down into his seat with a sense of complete well-being. Barbara would meet him at the station with the kidlets stuffed into the back seat. He closed his eyes going under the river and smiled slightly. There were three of them—Bruce, Jr.; Althea, named for his mother; and Billie Boy.

He smiled as he recollected the old reckless days before his marriage—Barbara in her corner room on the top floor of the old studio building, he grabbing free-lance assignments and writing doggedly on the play that never happened. It was still in Bab's desk. He had noticed the old blue cover on Sunday morning, when she was hunting for Althea's Sunday-school manual. Not that he minded now. Tucked comfortably in his philosophy of life was the old assumption that whatever is, is best.

Barbara had refused him pointblank before he took up Chalmers's offer. No woman, she told him; who had the ghost of a chance to make anything of herself should permit the handcuff of matrimony to lock her wrists. They had quarreled down in the basement grill at Caleotti's, and he had sailed for South America the next day, handling a big advertising scheme for old man Chalmers. It had gone over in a landslide, and Barbara's letter arrived with one from the firm. They dovetailed beautifully. This is what Barbara wrote:

Laugh if you want to, Bruce. I'm down on my back in St. Timothy's Hospital, knocked over by a car in the square the day after you left. One of fate's right and proper wallops to a proud and haughty lady, you'd say, wouldn't you? Anyway, it hurts, and I've got to have another bone-setting séance to-morrow that may pass me up. Jammed internally, they think. I'm only sending this down to wigwag good-by to you, dear old boy, and tell you it was all a lie. I think of you every blessed minute, and cry in my pillow for you at night, just the way they all do. I never wrote a love-letter in my life, and this seems to be a sort of a muddle; but if it's any satisfaction to you, there isn't anything in life but you, Bruce, now that I'm facing the finish.

He had taken the next boat back, and had found her up in the solarium on the hospital roof, sketching the panorama of Hell Gate bridge spanning the offing. He could not get by her outposts until he had laid her letter in her lap.

"We're going to be married just as soon as I can get you out of here," he told her.

Barbara read the pages with a curious little smile, and sighed with relief as she handed the letter back.

"Well, I certainly flunked, didn't I?" she said. "I hate ether, anyway; hate anything that makes me lose my grip on myself. But they've fixed me up all right—and I don't want to be married one single bit, Bruce!"

The following day he had gone down to



SHE WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO ALIGHT, AND EVEN WHILE BRUCE CHATTED WITH RIGGS AND LOOKED AROUND EXPECTANTLY FOR THE FAMILY CAR, SHE TOOK THE NEAREST JITNEY HOME

her room and packed up her possessions. There was not much, only three boxes of books and some pictures and gimcracks that she had picked up here and there. She told him to give the Roman seat and the bookcase to Tony Moran, on the floor below. Tony was an eager sort of a youngster from Montana who was going in for aerial photography. He had loved her, too, and he helped Bruce pack with a grim determination to do the square thing.

"It's a good thing you came back when you did, or I'd have married her myself," he said. "That girl's a goddess! She ought to be shielded and petted and taken care of so she'd never think of anything but turning out the kind of work she loves."

Bruce did not reply. Privately he believed he had solved the problem of Barbara's work. A steady salary and business prospects with a substantial firm had given him a new angle on life. The old glamour of shaking dice with luck for daily bread

and butter had lost its charm for him. But in the mental readjustment, he overlooked the fact that he was severing Bab from her work, from the one way she had of expressing herself.

## II

As the train swerved out toward the North Shore, Bruce watched the Sound shape itself about the wooded inlets with a relaxed contentment. His conscience was clear. Barbara had never had to worry since the day they were married. Chalmers had come straight across with the yearly contract, and Bruce had become a rising young business man of Greater New York. He had grown heavier, had acquired a permanent taste in tailors and tobacco, and Barbara could sign her name on the credit list of any store in town. Not so bad, considering the lean, reckless years of Pierrot! He yawned, smiled, opened up the evening paper to the editorial page, and relapsed

into a judicial frame of mind on timely topics.

At the same instant, in the car behind the smoker, Barbara glanced about with quick, anxious eyes, seeking the familiar brown derby and framing an alibi. It had been idiotic of her to miss the early train. She had been in town twice a week lately; the dentist date was overworked.

When the train pulled into the Hills station she was the first person to alight, and even while Bruce chatted with Riggs and looked around expectantly for the family car, she took the nearest jitney home.

"Mama's just got back, too," sang out Junior from the stair-landing when Bruce opened the front door. "We waited and waited, and I cwied and I cwied."

Barbara caught him up laughingly and silenced him with a kiss.

"I ran into town to-day," she said casually. "Waited for you at the station and just made the train. Come on to dinner."

Whatever rising curiosity or argument Bruce may have felt was curbed by his appetite and the dinner that lured from the cool, cozy dining-room. Nevertheless, two incidents registered. When he pulled the cork on a fresh bottle of chilli sauce and it popped with untimely zest, spraying Althea's white-linen frock and the delicate jonquil-tinted walls, Barbara merely smiled, her chin resting on her palms, her eyes half-closed in retrospection.

Again, Junior shut the high-chair tray with a bang on Billie Boy's chubby hand, and a roar arose that gashed the air. Still Barbara smiled, cuddled him in her arms, and kissed the smarting finger-tips absently. Even Junior stared at her, and seemed to sense that such repression was unseasonable and suspicious.

After dinner it was the unvarying custom for her to take the bunch of kidlets upstairs and stay with them until they fell asleep. This meant story-telling and a nightly riot. Bruce would doze for a while on the broad, low window-seat in the living-room, letting his cigar ease itself out unheeded. Over the fireplace hung a standardized home motto burned in old English lettering on rough oak. He usually eyed it in a dreamy haze of happiness as he rested.

Stay at home, my heart, and rest,  
Home-keeping hearts are happiest.

The room embodied all Bruce's ideas of comfort. The leather couch and huge chair

had furnished his room at college. In fact, when he had laid out the plan of the house, he had had in mind the big college study, with its low, beamed ceilings and rock fireplace, its built-in book-shelves and clean-cut angles. True, the kids left their toys around, but there was no sign of feminine perquisites. Bab's favorite room was upstairs next to the nursery—this merely because of the view over the Sound, and the spacious sleeping-porch. Somewhere up in the garret were her easel and studio things, which, so far as Bruce knew, had never been unpacked. The house harmony was tuned to Bruce's bachelor pitch, and had gradually taken on the appearance of a combination fraternity den and a Montessori *casa bambini*. If Bruce had crowded out Barbara's things, he had done so unconsciously.

About half past nine, after he had had his nap and gone out to one of the neighbors', Barbara would locate him on the party line; at eleven the dog would be put out and the burglar alarm set. It was all very pleasant and satisfactory. Bruce would take a final look out of his bedroom window at the glow along the western sky-line from Manhattan's night-blooming lights, and thank whatever gods might be for his well-being and his roof-tree.

To-night Barbara was asleep when he came in. He had lingered with Riggs, putting the final touches to the rules for a volunteer fire brigade down in the village. He came up-stairs softly, glanced in at the shadowy nursery, stumbled over an iron caboose, stepped into their bedroom, and turned up the wall light by the chiffonier to undress by.

Barbara's gray gloves and beaded hand-bag lay where she had dropped them in her haste when she came home. The sight of the bag reminded him of something he had saved for her, and he fumbled in his vest-pocket, fishing out a five-dollar gold piece. She had asked him to get one for Junior's birthday, to hide in his new reefer pocket. He opened her purse to put the gold piece in it, and saw there a key so totally different from any used in the house that it held his attention.

After a glance at the farthest bed, where Bab slept quietly, he picked it out gingerly and examined it. All the keys he knew were small, flat, nicked ones, whereas this was an old-style copper key, with no mark upon it.

A slight rustle from the other bed made him turn. Barbara had thrown one arm above her head. Her face looked girlish and wistful in the half light, with her two long, dark braids lying over her shoulders from under her little lace boudoir cap.

He replaced the key guiltily and disrobed. It was ridiculous even to admit it to himself—but the thing looked suspicious. In a way, it was an affront to the perfect understanding between Bab and himself. He kept nothing from her. What was she holding back from him?

He slipped into a suit of marigold-hued pajamas that always made him feel like the plantation scene in the minstrel second part, and laid him down in the nearest Vernis Martin twin bed with eyes that felt no call to slumber.

### III

FOR a full week he controlled himself. Only once afterward did he see the key. The beaded bag was lying on Barbara's writing-desk down-stairs when the maid brought in the milkman's bill. As Barbara drew out some bills to pay it, the key fell on the floor, and Bruce could have sworn, as he handed it back to her, that she showed confusion.

Again, there came a night when, as he talked with Maxwell under the windows of the living-room, he heard the sound of music. Barbara was playing the piano softly—not the usual fox-trot the kiddies loved, but Grieg's "Hall of the Mountain King." Swiftly, thrillingly, the peculiar tempo beat up to the blunt finale, restless, demanding, disturbing as the thrumming of Hawaiian guitars or the dull, hypnotic beat of Indian tomtoms.

Bruce's jaw dropped slightly as he listened. He failed to follow Maxwell's argument until the music ceased and Barbara stepped to the door.

"I'm coming right in," he called.

"No hurry, dear," came back to him, and she was gone.

Any other time she would have asked him how long he was going to stay out there and debate. Bruce felt vaguely injured as he heard her go up-stairs, humming to herself, and the memory of the key recurred to him with fresh irritation.

He could not bring himself to question the children or maids about it. That was too crude, too bourgeois; but he tried concentration, trying to flash a mental wire-

less to her so that she would tell him herself. Then one morning Althea touched off the fuse ingeniously.

She was teetering on an improvised seesaw, a long board which the youngsters had carted up from the cellar and laid across the veranda arms that bounded the front steps.

"We're going to have it here all day," she called to him, "'cause mother's going in again."

Bruce hesitated, lit a cigarette, and turned slowly around. At the upper window Bab held Billie Boy, fresh from his bath, and the two laughed down at him, cheek against cheek. He threw them a kiss and hurried down the street toward the station, calling himself a brute.

But it was a walk of a mile, and by the time he reached the station he was again troubled. Why had she not told him she was going to town that day? On such occasions she had always met him for lunch at one of the up-town hotels where there was music, and they had talked over home plans together.

He rode in without opening the morning paper, and passed by Riggs and Kincaid with unseeing eyes. When the usual line of commuters trailed up the side stairs to the street, he found a seat where he could keep an eye on the Long Island gate unobserved, and waited grimly. He was a fool, he granted, but he wanted to prove it to himself. Sitting there, he stared ahead of him, seeing only the outlines of a key that didn't fit.

She came in on the ten ten. He knew her hat in the scattered crowd, the little rough brown straw tricorné with a touch of vivid coral at one side. She walked with a step of decision, chin up, her face reminding him, as it always did, of the statuette of Lebrun, lifting a provocative smile of challenging camaraderie. Now that he thought of it, he realized how she had changed during the past month. He had heard her singing around the house, and when the children had talked to her she had answered them absently.

He walked after her, up the stairs and along the street, a heavy, cold fear crushing in on him. He had failed her, then! It was not enough, it appeared, to give the woman you loved all the work of your hands and brain, all the love and faith of your heart and soul. There was something lacking, something she had missed in him,



some door of happiness to which he had no key.

He felt a rising impulse to stop her, to hurry and speak to her as if he knew nothing of her intent, to do anything that might stop her before it was too late, before he had followed her to some damning thing that would be full proof against her. He

building. Bruce read the gold-lettered black sign that creaked from an iron arm to the left of the arched entrance, over the janitor's bell:

#### SUITES AND SINGLES

There was no elevator. He followed her cautiously up the heavy stairs to the fifth



HE SAW THERE A KEY SO TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM ANY USED IN THE HOUSE THAT IT HELD HIS ATTENTION

seemed to see her with a new vision. He had taken Barbara rather for granted of recent years, since the three youngsters had encroached on all privacy and privileges of companionship. Now he saw she was as slender and attractive as ever, with the same old boyish charm about her that he had always loved, and the quick, light walk, head up, shoulders down.

She took the Ninth Avenue Elevated to Fourteenth Street, where she left the train and made her way to a tall, old, red-brick

floor, and saw her stop before a door on the south corridor, insert a key in the lock, turn it, enter, and shut him out.

#### IV

It was all so amazing, so incomprehensible, that Bruce leaned back against the wall, staring at the door, trying to pull himself together, to keep from lurching at the panels and smashing them in. His Barbara, the mother bird of the home nest!

He bit his lip, closing his eyes frown-

ingly to keep back the mist that dimmed them. Every dancing devil of suggestion crowded to high carnival in his brain. Shaky, and fearful of losing his grip, he went back to the end window of the hall, and waited until he could smoke a cigarette and think clearly.

There was only one thing to do. Some

rier between them. He rushed forward, his shoulder ready for the impact as in the old football-rush days, when the door opened, and Barbara stared at him in dead silence.

Her hair was rumpled. She wore an old, paint-smeared smock, and cocked handily on one thumb was a battered, well-daubed palette.



"IT ISN'T IN YOU TO KNOW, OR ANY OTHER MAN, FOR THAT MATTER. IT ISN'T YOUR FAULT, BOY. YOU'VE DONE YOUR PART"

men would have stepped aside, but he made his mind up to fight for her even against himself. After eight years of what their life had been together, after the kidlets, and the long, close comradeship of love, he would not let her go. He had held her before, back there at the hospital, and it had all come out right. It was the memory of those first months that gave him the nerve to go after her and face whatever might be behind that closed door.

There was no answer when he rapped the first time; and suddenly everything went from him, all his belief in fate and the little wayward gods of chance, and there was left only the determination to smash the bar-

All this he saw first; next that the room was empty of any one save herself, that it held merely a couple of chairs, a cheap easel facing the north light, and a bare kitchen table, with some roughly built shelves against the wall.

"Found me, didn't you?" Barbara said, with a little smile. "You're out of breath. It's quite a walk up, isn't it?"

He stepped in, and she closed the door after him, leaning against it, a look of rebellious determination in her dark eyes as she watched him. Slowly he took in the full significance of the room. It was her getaway.

On the bare walls hung old-time sketches

that he recognized, a big charcoal study of Caleotti's black cat on the back fence with a strip of Chinese lanterns behind it, wind-swayed. There was the one from the hospital, too, the outline of Hell Gate bridge with the meandering river in the foreground and the water craft suggested in splashes of color. Behind the easel hung a couple of



"ARE YOU  
GETTING  
AWAY FROM  
THE ENVIR-  
ONMENT OR  
FROM ME?"

pastel heads, one of the boy who had brought up her coal at the old studio, the other of an old woman whom she had picked up in Union Square one night and turned into a Sibyl with a square meal and a bit of drapery.

On the floor was an old, faded Turkish runner that he remembered, and across the lower half of the north window were the curtains he had brought to her from the Argentine, orange silk, shot with gold and turquoise threads. The last time he had seen it, Althea was playing circus queen with it astride his old college chair.

Suddenly he saw the study on the easel, and it struck him like an uppercut. She had caught the view from the window with surety, the tall chimneys in the shimmering haze, the fluttering lines of varicolored washing, the roofs, vivid in variety and tint as some glimpse of Damascus, and beyond

them the mother-of-pearl Hudson slipping away in sea mist.

"Gee!" he breathed with an indrawn whistle, hands jammed deep in his pockets, head on one side. "Did you do that?"

Barbara looked past him with defiant intent, her gaze traveling from one object to another—from the green-and-orange Italian bowls and plates on the shelves to the two-burner gas-stove, then back to the easel.

"Yes, I did it," she answered, and waited for Bruce's usual grim and damning comment.

He walked up to the painting slowly, standing with his head thrust forward, sizing it up with keen, brightening eyes.

"Some picture!" he muttered. "Got it all there, haven't you, just as if you were looking at it right out of the window? I didn't know you could paint like that, Bab!"

"I'm not asking you to know or to understand," she replied in the throaty, sweet contralto he liked best in the world. "It isn't in you to know, or any other man, for that matter. It isn't your fault, boy. You've done your part—and more; but I needed—well, just this."

"I've got to hand it to you," Bruce declared, not heeding her at all. A new pride was born in him. He knew the real thing, even in art, when he saw it, and this had come from the finger-tips and brain of his wife. "It's all to the good, Bab. It's there. It makes me proud of you!"

He hung his hat on the apex of the easel, and she caught it down with a savage movement that startled him.

"Great Scott, there you go, even now! I said you couldn't understand! That's exactly why I had to come here, away from where you could hang your hat on my easel, scatter your old ashes over my sketches, and move everything of mine out of place so I never could find things. You've got your office, Bruce. I haven't a ghost of a place I can call my own, not a spot that I can escape to. Don't you realize that? I stood it as long as I could, then I found this; and now you've spoiled it!"

He chewed on an unlighted cigarette, still gazing at the painting, and taking courage from memories.

"Are you getting away from the environment, or from me?"

"From all of it!" She leaned forward accusingly. "There are times when the house is full of husbands, Bruce. You're the most numerous person I ever knew, and you've grown away from this sort of thing. You don't miss it. I do. Maybe I'm a kind of a throwback, but I found I was getting crosser and more irritable every day. I just couldn't stand any of you, not even blessed Billie Boy; so one day I drifted into town and found this. After I'd rented it I was scared to death for fear you'd find out, and I had to smuggle my easel and things in by degrees." She paused, and when she spoke again it was in a quieter tone. "It was lots of fun. Do you like my painting?"

"It's great!" Bruce shook his head solemnly. "It's your right. I'd even forgotten you ever liked to paint. It seemed as if you liked the kids better."

"I do, goose," she laughed, snuggling close behind his shoulder. "Why, you'll never know how it hit me when I found Thea dabbling around in a box of my old colors one day. She'd dashed off a bit with the real feeling in it, Bruce—our girly, only seven! I nearly hugged the life out of her. I suppose I ought to be content with that, to see it coming out in them, but I'm not. I want this for myself, too."

His arm went around her with a new appreciation of this woman whom he had thought all his.

"Keep it—only let me run in now and then, just as I used to before I sent those to you."

He nodded at the orange-and-gold curtains; but she shook her head obstinately.

"Bruce, I can't! I want a door nobody can unlock but me."

He reached for his hat, his lips compressed. She had beaten him; but not so much herself as the power that lay behind the paint on the easel picture. He knew that underlying all her love for him and the children there was still the undomesticated nomad in her; that even though he took her from this material room, there would be still the inner chamber of her spirit where she would elude him—the room that no key of his could unlock.

Just for a minute she stood while he walked to the door—then he felt her arms close about his throat, her head pressed down in the curve of his shoulder, and he held her in a grip that hurt.

"Keep your old key," he said presently. "Just try to make the five twenty once in a while."

"You don't mind, Bruce?"

She looked up at him quickly, almost challengingly, but he was staring past her at the painting with new pride in his eyes.

"Mind?" He regarded it contentedly. "Go ahead, Bab. Every mother bird needs a twig of her own at the back of the north wind."

## THE FUTURE OF WINGS

An Aviator's Song

HAVING once baffled cloud and gale,  
Having once flown  
Above the highest eagle-trail  
Alone,  
Shall I go back to anchored things?  
Clip or let others clip my wings?

No, from the oceans of the air  
I'll track and chart  
Streams like the Amazon to where  
They start—  
All the great rivers of the south  
To secret source from delta'd mouth.

Then I may plan more daring flights—  
The storm-bound poles—  
And aim for still undreamed-of heights,  
Such goals  
As our near moon, and, after Mars,  
The archipelago of stars.

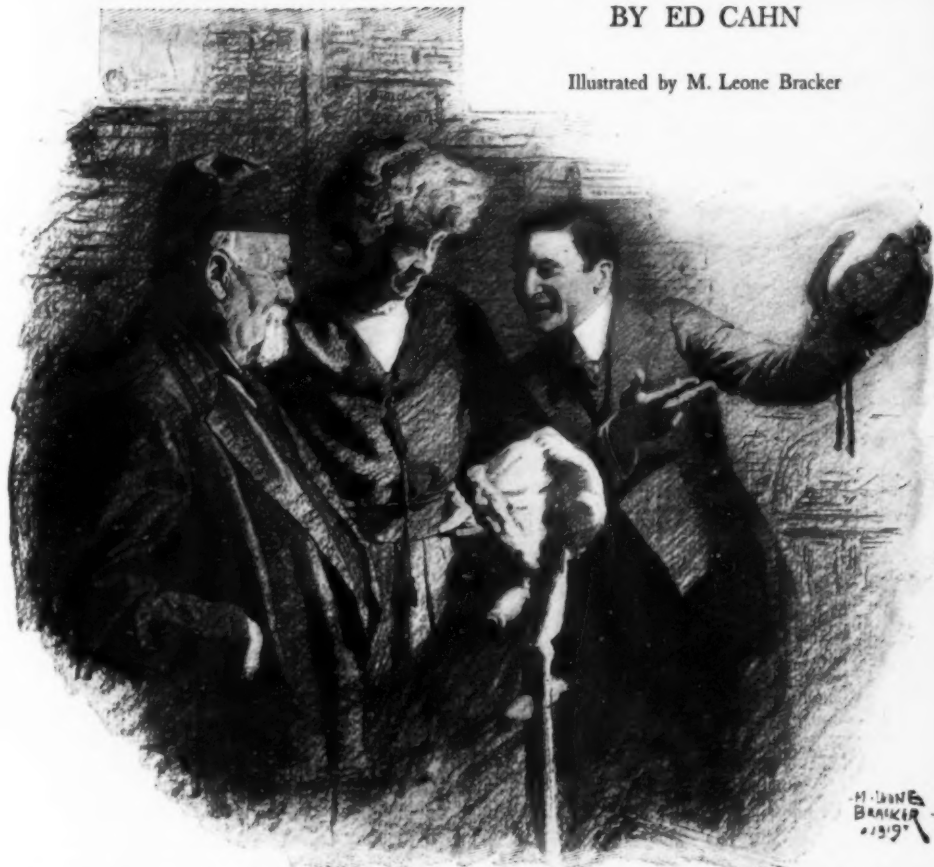
Richard Butler Glaenser



# Balancing the Love Ledger

BY ED CAHN

Illustrated by M. Leone Bracker



"STICKERS, MR. GREENBERG, ARE ALWAYS CHEAP. BUT THESE GOODS, MR. GREENBERG, ARE RIGHT. THEY'VE GOT STYLE, THEY'VE GOT FINISH, AND LOOK AT THE QUALITY!"

THE counter and the stock-boxes were dusted and the veil-mirrors polished, and still it was early. Miss Felder, minutes behind time, went scurrying into the cloak-room like a hen caught loafing on the job. Sadie, the junior member of the Greenberg staff, flapped a duster over the gingham and prints, but she was not losing a word of what Mr. Bennie Levinter, infants'-wear salesman, was saying to Gretta Mendell at the veiling counter.

Gretta wondered whether Sadie could see that Bennie had her going.

Now one cannot be born in Rivington Street and bred in Delancey, and board in Forty-Third, near Eighth Avenue—one can-

not be small and round with big auburn eyes to match ropes of wavy auburn hair—one cannot have been pursued for really unusual beauty since one can remember, and meantime earn an honorable living, without acquiring considerable poise. And poise Gretta certainly had. Man in all his guises was known to her, and she had dealt with him as he presented himself, unhesitatingly and efficiently.

Nevertheless, when Mr. Levinter leaned over her counter her usually dauntless spirit scurried for cover. It was a fact that she could not explain, for certainly no sensible girl who saved her money and trimmed her own hats could possibly approve of Bennie.

To begin with, he was too fresh. Then, he dressed more like a wedding-guest than a good business man. He let it be suspected that he was a gay dog. He bragged about how often he was broke. He played pinoche for money and lost. And she knew for a fact that he would borrow money to go to a baseball game and disdain the bleachers even then. He had rattled around in half a dozen different commission jobs in the six months that he had been calling on her boss, without accumulating anything more substantial, she suspected, than a quantity of fine raiment.

Goodness, he ought to save his money! But all the same, that gray suit was handsome. She admired the skill with which he had chosen the mauve scarf and matched it in the stripe of his exquisite linen and the border of his handkerchief. The rich sheen of the pearl in his pin was not lost upon her, nor the monogram on the expensive-smelling cigarette he grasped in his well-kept fingers and tapped against a white palm.

"Don't you ever smile?" he was asking her. "Gee, have a heart, Miss Mendell!"

Gretta looked into the eyes that he contrived, with his usual effrontery, to bring so close to hers. There was admiration in them, pleading, too, but behind both she thought she saw an impish gleam of laughter. He was making fun of her! And in her experience the fun-making had always been on the other side.

"Have a heart?" she echoed shortly, banging a glove-box down under the bold curve of his nose. "Say, Mr. Levinter, I've got heart enough to tell you that I just heard Mr. Greenberg come in the back door, and if he sees you killing my time when you ought to be talking bonnets and coats to Miss Felder in the—"

But Bennie, hearing the proprietor's unmistakable shuffle and puff, hastened to meet him, sample-case in hand.

"G'morning, Mr. Greenberg," he said affably, and planted his case so as to block the narrow aisle.

Moses Greenberg's liverish frown increased in severity.

"What? A drummer a'ready to worry my soul out, and not yet one customer in the place? *Ach, tzuris!*"

He flapped his flabby yellow hands helplessly, like a weary man annoyed by flies. Observing this sign, the staff wielded its three dusters with zeal. Clearly Mr. Green-

berg had not digested his breakfast, therefore rocks and shoals and breakers were ahead for everybody who plied the commercial seas in his vicinity.

"Yes," said Bennie lightly, "here I am bright and early before you get your crowds."

Crowds, indeed! What, in an Eighth Avenue store like Greenberg's on a Monday morning? Gretta permitted herself a grin—inside, where it would do no harm.

"I was just going to show Miss Felder our new Pixie bonnet, Mr. Greenberg. Believe me, it's some number, Mr. Greenberg. It's taking with the trade something stupendous. One of the foim sold to Siggel's yesterday—well, I wouldn't tell you how many, for fear you'd say I was stretching the truth to influence your judgment."

Greenberg, who had never been remarkable for courtesy, turned his back and walked away without a word. Bennie picked up his case and followed.

"Thank you, Mr. Greenberg," he said cheerily. "I know you're not going to regret looking at this stuff. I confidently expect Miss Felder to go into a conniption fit over the coat we got out to match the Pixie bonnet. It's a winner! And put with the bonnet, my solemn word for it, Mr. Greenberg, no lady could resist them. Why, they buy them, Mr. Greenberg, if they gotta take the money out of the rent."

Miss Felder's gaunt frame and non-committal face were behind the counter extending across the back of the store. Bennie plumped his case down before her.

"Morning, Miss Felder. Gee, you're certainly looking fine lately, ain't you?"

His fingers worked like lightning at strap and buckle, and in the twinkling of an eye the Pixie bonnet and the Pixie coat in several styles lay spread out before her.

But Greenberg hesitated not in his majestic tread, and out of the corner of his eye Bennie saw his shiny alpaca disappear through a door at the end of the counter, and he heard his chair groan as he dropped into it. Mr. Greenberg was ensconced in his office, which was hugely placarded "Private."

But, fortunately, he had not closed the door.

Miss Felder patted her back hair, yawned, and picked up a Pixie bonnet. She turned it round and round on her bony fingers.

"Say, Mr. Levinter, this is certainly a

cute little article. Klawvitch & Rotsky must have a new designer."

"You said a mouthful that time! He's right over from Paris, direct," agreed Bennie, from whose imaginative brain the Frenchman sprang full-grown on the instant. "Now here's the Pixie in pink and blue and ivory."

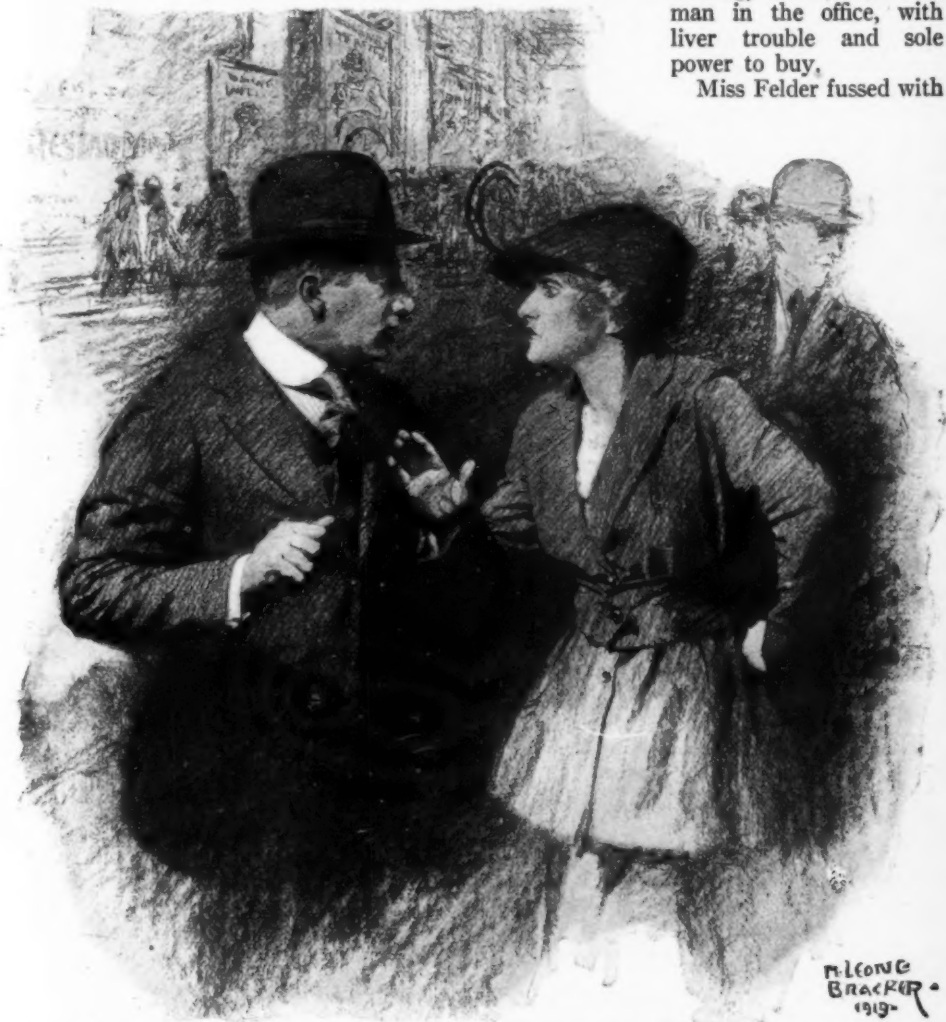
"Lovely!" cooed Miss Felder. "Oh, look at the ears of that one!"

"That's our super-Pixie—it makes a kid look like the heir to forty millions in negotiable securities, not to say money. And look at the coats, Miss Felder! Didja

ever see anything so swell before in all your born life? Look at the cut of that garment. Classy, eh? Not a whisper of skimp. My firm always says we charge a price, and we get it, and we give big value for it. No price-butcherin'; no pinching on labor or materials; good American business methods, Miss Felder. Observe, will you, Miss Felder, the buttons? I don't have to tell an expert like you they are the best before-the-war goods. See the shanks?"

Bennie, waxing eloquent, sang a very song of songs in praise of Pixie coats and Pixie bonnets; sang to a withered old maid in dingy black, and a fat man in the office, with liver trouble and sole power to buy,

Miss Felder fussed with



DON'TCHA CALL ME ANYTHING! I HATE A MAN THAT BRAGS ABOUT THE GIRLS HE KNOWS! YOU CAN JUST SCRATCH MY NAME OFF YOUR ROTTEN OLD LIST, AND DON'T YOU DARE TO SPEAK TO ME AGAIN THE LONGEST DAY YOU LIVE!"

her bonnet-boxes, consulted a stock-sheet, started for the office, and stopped short.

"Lend me this stand a minute, Miss Felder. When Mr. Greenberg comes out, I'd like him to see how great these Pixies dress up a counter."

Bennie was acutely aware that Mr. Greenberg could hear every word that he said and was, furthermore, listening.

Deftly he hung up a selection of bonnets and dressed a figure in a Pixie coat. He considered it a lucky accident that Miss Felder, turning them around, should have placed them on a case behind the counter in line with Mr. Greenberg's vision should he look that way.

There was a pause, and things seemed at a dead standstill. Miss Felder asked some grave questions about linings and washability, which Bennie answered.

Another pause. Miss Felder remarked that it surely was one swell day, and Bennie agreed, as he observed that Gretta was breaking the sternest rule of the store by standing in the doorway.

"Yes," pursued Miss Felder, "business is picking up lately, though, of course, it's always slow mornings."

Gretta seemed to be talking to some people outside. She was inviting them in. They hesitated, and then they entered—two customers whose heels clacked sharply on the bare boards, and whose high-pitched voices would have penetrated a chilled-steel vault.

It appeared that they wanted waists—swell waists. They had been about to go over to Fifth Avenue, but—if they were suited—money with them was no object. Gretta escorted them down the aisle and Sadie began pulling down boxes with commendable vim.

The next moment Mr. Greenberg emerged from his office.

"How mooch them Bixie bonnuts?" he demanded.

Gretta did not hear what Bennie said, but the boss's "*Wu zuks du?*" could have been heard on the sidewalk.

"Say, young feller, I tell you the trut'—the very same t'ing I buy from Zuskin & Franks for a dollar less, and better stoof, too—fine silik, mooch buttons, and mooch braids."

"No wonder!" countered Bennie. "Braid is all out of fashion, so, of course, they sell cheap. Stickers, Mr. Greenberg, are always cheap. But these goods, Mr. Greenberg,

are right. They've got style, they've got finish, and look at the quality! I'm telling you something now, Mr. Greenberg—there's not a house in New York that can beat us for price. That's a bold assertion, Mr. Greenberg, but it's more than that: it's the truth. We're not pikers, you unnerstand. There's no shoe-strings about us. We're not here to-day and gone to-morrow; we're real folks, and nobody could undersell us on the same stuff."

"Nu, nu, don't talk like a foolisher," said Greenberg. "Listen, I wanna esk you something. You woik for Klawvitch & Rotsky, don'tcha?"

"Yessir."

"All right, all right! Listen—Klawvitch & Rotsky is beside Zuskin & Franks like a ant to a elephant. Zuskin & Franks they got the mazuma to buy big where you people buy little. Zuskin & Franks got scientificks menegement—they—"

"Excuse me, Mr. Greenberg," interrupted Bennie, getting out his gold pencil. "I never throw rocks at another foim. Howda I know but I might be working for them some day? But all I say is this—when it comes to scientific management, we're it. When it comes to cutting out waste and keeping down expenses—well, listen.

"Our Mr. Rotsky he is born in the business, and he buys our materials and buys them right. Our Mr. Klawvitch, he is the factory boss, and it's a fly operator that gets away with anything on him. Mrs. Rotsky she is forelady. Mrs. Klawvitch keeps the books. Meyer Rotsky, the boss's brother, is the head cutter. Lizzie Berger, Mrs. Rotsky's sister, she is head operator. Also all the little Klawvitches work in the place, so you can see for yourself what becomes of the expenses with our system; and, Mr. Greenberg, if anybody can sell bonnets any cheaper than us, why then they must be kikes! Now, then, how many dozen bonnets and how many numbers coats?"

Mr. Greenberg delivered the short series of strangulated cachinnations which passed with him for a laugh.

"Vell, young feller, you got more breath than I got. One dotzen each, assorted, I could maybe use if you cut the price five per cent and gave me sixty days' dating."

Bennie shrugged his expressive shoulders and elevated the hand that held the gold pencil to the level of his chin.



"All right, Mr. Greenberg, I'm not mean. I'll split the difference if you make it a dozen and a half each. Honest, I'll lose half my lunch-hour explaining to my boss what license I got to break the rule about price-cutting."

Greenberg turned to Miss Felder.

"Stock's pretty low," said she. "I could use that many, I'm sure."

"Did you see me put it over, kid?"

She laughed, swelled her chest in teasing imitation of his, and thumped it hard with her little fist.

"Oh, what a brave boy am I!"

"You bet!" he agreed. "Believe me, kiddo, I can put it over every time. Now I've got to go sell Simon down the line, and by that time it will be eleven thirty."



"THEN, GRETTA, I DREW ME MY LINE AND ADDED 'EM ALL UP, AND THE ANSWER WAS YOU! THAT'S WHY I PUT YOU AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LIST—JUST WHERE THE ANSWER BELONGS"

"Vell, you know. All right, eighteen each assorted pink, blue, and ivory," said Greenberg, and returned to his lair.

## II

So Bennie made the order out at thirty days, while inside Mr. Greenberg conducted a loud altercation by telephone.

"Take my advice," murmured Miss Felder. "Come back for the confirmation after lunch. He's getting so mad with that phone he's liable to cancel you now."

"I gotcha, and thanks, Miss Felder!"

Bennie picked up his case and departed. He stopped and swelled his chest youthfully at Gretta's counter.

Have your hat on, and I'll buy you a lunch you'll remember for hours."

Miss Mendell stiffened. She had never been an inch outside of any door with him, and he was taking too much for granted; but before she could open her lips he had bestowed a bone-cracking squeeze upon her hand and dodged out of the door.

"Well, of all the noive!" hissed Sadie, who as usual had missed nothing. "I guess you'll fool that fresh guy?"

Gretta guessed so herself, though she didn't answer; but when eleven twenty-nine came she had on her hat and was powdered with unusual care. When she saw Mr. Levinter hustling down the street she

stepped out of the store and walked with ostentatious haste in the other direction.

He caught up and pinched the arm that he seized.

"Wait a minute, girly! We got lots of time."

She whirled around and looked at him with a strange expression, half exasperation and half chagrin. Had she fooled him, or had he seen through her little device?

"Where'd you like to go, kiddo? Say, I'd ask you if I could smoke, only I'm afraid you might say no, and I'm dying for a pill."

"My, you're sassy, Mr. Levinter! I didn't say I was going to lunch with you. And who told you to call me kid? Leave go my arm, too! I've been able to walk alone for some years past. And if there's a thing in the world I hate the smell of worse than another it's those coffin-nails."

"Meow!" said Bennie. Then he tenderly kissed the cigarette he had just lighted and cast it from him.

"Now, Miss Mendell, where can I have the privilege of taking you?"

He raised the hat from his handsome, dark head, and bowed with as much ceremony as if Eighth Avenue had been a gilded salon. Gretta, with her mind all made up to send him on the double-quick, melted like snow in sunshine.

"Why, to Jerry's," she said with sudden recklessness.

Bennie stared and then shook his head.

"Oh, no, girly, nothing like that! Jerry's is a naughty, naughty place. Come on in here. I feel just like a fish lunch."

The next thing Gretta knew she was in a snug, palm-screened corner with Bennie, bending over a menu.

"Lobster, kid? Oh, pardon me, Miss Mendell. Oh, say! I'll say 'Miss' to you if I gotta, but I wish you'd call me Bennie. I got a feeling I'm going to think a lot of you."

"Yes, I'll have lobster and a combination salad, and you can call me Gretta if you want to awfully."

Well, unless you are a hundred and fifty and deaf, dumb, and halt, with your memory of life and the delights thereof entirely defunct, you know how easy it is to fall in love at one's first meal with a young and fascinating somebody of the other sex, particularly if, all unknowing, you have been trembling on the verge of it for some time.

Gretta ceased trembling and tumbled in head first. Something about Bennie's bright, dark eyes, his warm and very human mouth, his princely manner to the waiter—anyhow, I repeat, the mischief was done. Gretta wanted to hug him, to ruffle his hair and pat his cheeks and borrow his handkerchief. She began to wonder what it would be like to kiss him, and passed speedily from wondering to wanting.

I suppose, possibly, I ought to suppress that fact more or less, but I can't conscientiously, for the blood of Israel's sons and daughters is warm in their ardent veins and kindles quickly.

The fire was burning brightly on Bennie's side, too. Gretta's glorious hair and eyes, her dainty manners, the gorgeous ebb and flow of color in her cheeks, the tinkling voice that used the same easy New Yorkisms that he used and turned them into music! He felt toward her as he had never felt toward any other girl, and the possessive instinct asserted itself.

"Say, Gretta, I'd like to call on you. Can I?"

The damsel's heart leaped for joy, but, being a damsel, she skirmished a little before she gave consent.

Bennie produced his trusty gold pencil and a little book monogrammed like his shirt and his socks and his handkerchief and his cigarettes. Gretta saw her name go down at the foot of a lengthy list, and the world turned instantly from happy rose to jealous green.

"What's the list?" she cooed with a softness that would have warned an older man.

Bennie was so tremendously stirred and impressed by the charms of Miss Mendell that he was anxious above all things that she should be similarly impressed with him. If he had been a few years younger, he would have shown off before her by walking on his hands and spitting through his teeth. As it was, he wished her to know that he was a highly popular guy, that he and Dan Cupid had laid low their victims by the dozen. So he said negligently:

"This list? Oh, jus' what I call my love ledger." He leafed back a page or so written solid with names. "I keep track of my flames here. I know lots more girls, but I don't put 'em all down; just the ones I like. I take most of 'em out."

Gretta's heart seemed to stop dead, then to bump against her teeth, and at last to pound with a hot, shamed rage. He had

put *her* down at the bottom of that insulting list! For a second her fingers itched to hurl the remains of the lobster at Bennie's vain head, but all she did was to finish her coffee and glance at the clock on the wall.

"I must be getting back to the store now," she said.

"Me, too. I got to get that little order confirmed."

"Do you think it will be?"

"Sure! Say, Gretta, when I put a thing over it stays put."

Once out of the restaurant, Gretta turned on him.

"You make me sick! You think you are so clever, and all the while you are nothing in this world but a dressed-up dapper that's stuck on himself something funny! You put it over? Just let me tell you that it was Miss Felder and me that sold that order. She's mad at Greenberg because he won't give her a raise, and she's buying her head off to get even. She'll quit and leave him overstocked, if she gets half a chance!"

"Is that so?" drawled Bennie. "And where do you come in?"

"Where? Exactly at the point where those women for waists did. I got so sick of seeing you waiting around without a chance in the world that I went out and pulled 'em in. You're so smart that you haven't found out in six months that Greenberg is still the same man that sold ribbons and laces off a push-cart on the East Side, and that he's as superstitious about the first transaction of the day as a woman is about dropping a comb. You haven't found out that he will never buy goods until he has had a customer himself. You talked your head off, and what good did it do? Miss Felder gave him a hundred hints he should buy, and what good did it do? But when I drag in the waist customers everything is changed. Greenberg comes out; Miss Felder nods, and you got the order. *You* put it over? Cats!"

"All right, kiddo."

"Don'tcha call me that!" she cried furiously. "Don'tcha call me anything! I hate a man that brags about the girls he knows! You can just scratch my name off your rotten old list, and don't you dare to speak to me again the longest day you live! You say you put it over. Well, now you watch me put it back again!"

Bennie was still trying to think of something sufficiently cutting to say in reply

when they reached the store. It was empty of customers, and Miss Felder stood near the door.

"Mr. Levinter and I have just had a swell lunch together," announced Gretta. "You give him an order and he takes me to lunch. Funny, isn't it?"

She flounced off to put away her hat, leaving a displeased Miss Felder to listen to the floundering excuses of a demoralized and exasperated infants'-wear salesman.

The confirmation of that order? Miss Felder was very sorry, but she had been going over her stock and found she had too many bonnets and coats now. It would be her duty to tell Mr. Greenberg the fact, and he, of course, would please himself about buying stock they could not use. Mr. Levinter would please excuse her. Helpless and raging, Bennie watched her angular, black-voile back disappear through the door marked "Private."

Greenberg himself delivered the blow.

"Hey, Levinter!" he called. "Miss Felder says nix on them Bixies, so the order is off. Call again some time when we are more in need of goods."

He put a period to this by slamming the office door behind him. Miss Felder emerged, looking cold and virtuous. Gretta, tying her black apron on as she came down the aisle, looked maliciously triumphant.

"Well, Mr. List-Maker, what did I tell you?"

And Bennie, too crestfallen for retort, retired with what dignity he could muster.

### III

ONE might suppose that to Gretta revenge would be sweet and satisfying, but such was not the case. Her womanly pride, being avenged, promptly curled up and went to sleep. From the moment Bennie left her to her triumph she began to repent, and by the time the store closed she was as miserable as a bad conscience and a sore heart could make her.

That night she put herself to bed without any supper, and the next evening her landlady was waiting for her.

"Ach, Gott, Miss Mendell, the next time you cry all night long, please don't ruin my goot fedder pillars! All day in the sun I got them hanging, and still they ain't dry yet." Gretta's white face startled her. "Ach, mine childt, you ain't lost you jop?"

But Gretta bolted past her and mounted aloft to the regions where small singles were

cheap. The landlady, reflecting that in any event the rent was paid in advance, went back to her fried cabbage. The thin young man on the first floor took up his flute and blew upon it. The Yiddish comedian and his second wife quarreled temperamentally over their herrings in the second back, and a fretful baby continued its lament.

Sitting on the edge of her bed, the girl turned a letter over and over in her hand. Whether to sally forth and post it or not—that was the question. Whether by posting it, to sacrifice her revenge, deny her pride, proclaim herself sorry, and thereby lay herself open to false interpretation; or, by not posting it, to be forever mean, hateful, and entirely consistent. All the way home she had debated, and now she must stop being silly and decide once and for all.

"Oh, I won't post it—I won't! There, that settles it!"

The letter was tossed aside. She put on her slippers, preparatory to spending a miserable evening in comfort; and then she retrieved the letter and started down-stairs.

Mrs. Meyer's voice floated up from the lower regions.

"Good evening, mister," she was saying. "Sure, Miss Mendell's home. A good girl she is; always home early nights."

"Glad news!" answered Bennie's jaunty voice. "You just tell her Mr. Levinter is here, will you?"

Mrs. Meyer came puffing up the stairs. Gretta had a mad impulse to hide, and flattened herself into the darkness of a corner while Mrs. Meyer brushed past and toiled on up, calling in a voice that might have lifted the roof:

"Miss Men-dell! There is he-ar a young man for you! Miss Men-dell!"

It sounded to Gretta like a pæan of praise that a man had been landed at last. She heard Bennie chuckling in the lower hall. He was laughing at her, probably—or at Mrs. Meyer, or the shabby boarding-house. She'd show him!

"Oh, Mrs. Meyer!" she called. "Who is it?"

"It's Mr. Levinter, Miss Mendell. Oi, oi, such a dude!" This in what she fondly believed to be a whisper.

"Oh!" A chilling interval. "Tell Mr. Levinter I'm not in."

"*Koosch*, he could heard you!" hissed Mrs. Meyer. "Vere are you anyhow?"

Bennie had indeed heard—and did not propose to be denied in any such fashion.

He came bounding up the stairs, clutching a huge bunch of roses in one hand. He made straight for Gretta's hiding-place, laughing as he came.

"Aw, Gretta, don't turn me down cold. Say, you dear little bunch of claws, I'm crazy 'bout you. Look at the swell roses I bought you! And I'm going to 'pologize, too. I oughta told you more about my love ledger. Here! I brought it along so you could tear it up if you don't like it. Why, listen, girly, it's been like a problem in 'rithmetic. All those girls' names are only ciphers and figures in a column. I got a lot, because none of them were the right ones; so I kept looking and bookkeeping and bookkeeping until I found you. Then, Gretta, I drew me my line and added 'em all up, and the answer was you! That's why I put you at the bottom of the list—just where the answer belongs. You are the sweetest, beautifullest girl in the world. You got them all faded with me. I stop looking right here, for I only want one girl, and that girl is you!"

"Oh, Bennie, I'm so sorry I was mean!" quavered Gretta, and melted into tears and smiles and Bennie's arms all at once.

Mrs. Meyer clumped down the stairs and turned up the gas so as not to miss anything. She stood smiling with her hands on her hips.

"Ain't it a crime I got no parlor?" she asked of deaf ears.

Gretta's rainbow smile flashed through her tears of bliss.

"Bennie, look! I was just going out to post this. See, it's addressed to you. That's my writing. Inside is Mr. Greenberg's order, all signed. He's going to take those goods."

"You don't say? Now—after canceling?"

She nodded.

"You see, I—I—just talked to him a little, and he changed his mind. Oh, Bennie, I guess you did put one over after all, and it was on me!"

The rosy color flooded into her cheeks, and Bennie's lips sought hers.

"No, kiddo," he said positively, "you put it all over me!"

"Vell," said Mrs. Meyer to herself as she tiptoed away, "I guess pretty soon I lose a roomer. They'll get married, sure; but I can see by the way they gotta argue about whose fault it was that they're gointa fight somepin fierce!"



# American Soldiers and the Women of France

THE DAILY LIFE OF OUR BOYS WHILE BILETETED IN THE FRENCH VILLAGES—THE FRIENDSHIPS BEGUN AT THE VILLAGE FOUNTAIN, AND THE CHAPERONED COURTSHIPS OF THE EVENING LESSON

By Allan V. Elston

THE American soldier in France saw many terrible things, and many that were not terrible. Only half of his story is a chapter of trenches. The other half is a chapter of billets—billets of waiting, training, resting; billets oftentimes in peaceful spots, enclosed between verdant forests and lying on the banks of bubbling trout-streams; billets in homes where women cooked and children played, and maidens went willingly for water to the town pump, knowing well that a whole platoon would offer to carry the bucket back; billets of French lessons, games, and romance.

When the boys wrote home that they were bored of their billets and wanted to go up to the front, it was generally camouflage. They liked their billets. I was the billeting officer of a village in the Haute Marne occupied by a battalion of Kansas and Missouri farmer boys, and my observations were that they took to the billet life like ducks to water. They had been away from home a long time, in cantonments, troop-trains, and transports, and it meant something to sit on the door-step of a home—even a poor, mean home—and to play with babies and children, to watch women sew and cook, to carry water for one pretty girl and to milk the cow for another.

Most of the American soldiers never saw Paris—nor, in fact, any large town in France—except for hurried transits. France behind the trenches to them meant their

billet village, usually somewhere in the Haute Marne or the Vosges. Here were the last homes that many of them ever knew. Those who come back will always have happy memories of these pleasant places, for they were scenes of marvelous beauty.

Much of America's best and loveliest is paralleled in that picturesque region of France. Our boys could look around them and see wooded hillsides like the Alleghanies, and valleys whose golden grain recalled Kansas. They could wash in brooks whose sparkling waters and rainbow-trout were like those of Colorado. It was good that our troops spent the months of waiting there instead of in the cities. It was good that they lived under home roofs, instead of in tents and barracks, for it helped to fill the aching void of homesickness. It was good because the French villagers are good people.

We were the first battalion of Americans in our village. For three years French troops had been living there, and our advent meant a great change in the life of the population. Many of their ways had to be readjusted. The villagers, who were all women, children, and old or crippled men, were very backward about getting acquainted. They spent a week or two in just watching and sizing up this new and strange breed of men. The Americans had peculiar ideas. They drank so much water; they liked to sleep with the windows open; they shaved every day; they had so much

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EDITORIAL NOTE—The author of this article recently returned from France, after serving as a captain in the American Expeditionary Forces. The facts given here came under his observation while he was detailed as the billeting officer of a village not far from Chaumont, in a part of France where large numbers of our troops were quartered before going to the front.

laundry; and they had such a princely disdain for money. But these little barriers of taste being finally broken down, everybody warmed up nicely.

#### LAUNDRY AS A SOCIAL LINK

The troops didn't eat with the French families, of course. The messes were operated by the company cooks and mess-sergeants entirely independent of the billets. The latter were used only for shelter and sleeping-places. It was chiefly through the humble medium of laundry, therefore, that the boys became acquainted with the villagers. They took their soiled clothes to Marie, Marthe, and Jeannette to be washed, and thus conventionally formed a solid basis of friendship.

In the center of the village, on the bank of a clear stream, was a circular fountain. Here a dozen or two of the village women were to be found all day long, washing soldiers' clothes. They rubbed soap on the clothes, dipped them in the water, and rubbed them vigorously against the stone coping of the fountain.

For three years or more the good women had been rubbing blue uniforms against that coping, until the stones had taken a bluish color. Now styles had changed. Olive-drab filled the streets and doorways of billets. Girls came mysteriously into possession of olive-drab caps, and wore them to work and to mass; and the blue was scrubbed off the fountain stones by the friction of olive-drab shirts.

Understand that in this poor village it was no social disgrace for a girl to wash clothes at the public fountain. The very prettiest and most coveted belles washed clothes; not only that, they milked cows, hoed potatoes, and cradled wheat. Their lot was to work, not eight hours a day, like the American laborer, but from twelve to fourteen hours; and they accepted their lot cheerfully.

With an entire battalion of Americans in town, the most profitable work of all was to wash clothes; so a few weeds were allowed to grow among the potatoes, and the homelier daughters were sent to milk the cows and cradle the wheat, while the prettier ones remained at the fountain. And the soldiers brought them shirts—many shirts. One boy took the same shirt to the same girl three times in the same day, painstakingly soiling it each time by rubbing it on the ground.

Thus friendships budded and bloomed. The troops generally had to drill all day on the common outside the village, returning about half past four. Then they had an hour to prepare for retreat. It was observed by the officers that discipline at this ceremony had never been so good. The companies fell in at first call, spick and span. It became hard to catch a man at retreat inspection for not being shaved, shined, and properly hair-cut. Rifles, too, were immaculate. Nobody wanted to be stuck with three days' kitchen police, and so miss his evening French class.

Moreover, the soldiers stood very straight during the inspection, and executed the manual with snap and precision; for the girls of the village generally knocked off work for a space at this time, and congregated across the street from the company containing their particular favorite, to watch his soldierly movements with a personal pride.

When the first sergeants dismissed the companies, the boys broke with a yell for their messes, and got that over with. Then they sallied forth to perfect their command of the French language. They developed an astounding thirst for knowledge in this line. After the battalion had been in the village three weeks, every girl in town under thirty-five had a regular French class of one pupil. The classes were conducted on the door-steps of the billets, with mothers and grandmothers sewing in the background. Often the mothers—many of them had lost their husbands at the first battle of the Marne—had their classes, too.

These French classes were helpful to many and harmful to none. Where there was love-making, it was the most properly conducted love-making in the world. Seldom did it get beyond the stage of a few words looked up in the vocabulary with painful deliberation and written on the fly-leaves of a tattered French grammar, while the loved one waited anxiously for the result. It typified the sentiment of America for France. Through it the American soldier learned to know the French people.

#### THE WOMEN FARMERS OF FRANCE

The pupil generally reported a half-hour early for his lesson, and helped the teacher to milk her cows and to perform her evening chores. It was the great delight of these farmer boys to show off their agricultural prowess, and many a long evening did they

spend in assisting their *patronnes*, for it is light till nine o'clock in the French summer. Sometimes, in the fading twilight, one could see a man in olive-drab in a wheat-field away up the valley, wielding a scythe, while another figure in calico followed along and bound the golden stems together. Pitiful were his efforts to tell her how it was done in Kansas, and pitiful yet beautiful were her efforts to understand.

Farmer boys, especially, liked the billets. In France, as a rule, farmers live in the villages, keeping their live stock in the village stables. Between the villages, the country is generally a straight sweep of field or forest, while the villages are simply groups of farmhouses built together along the streets. An American farmer boy found it interesting to compare French methods and French implements with his own, and never tired of investigating the barn-yards of his billet. And as the farmer of France in 1918 was generally a woman or a girl, it is not strange that a little sentiment often crept in, too.

The interest he took in her cows and her horses; the zeal with which he spoke to the billeting officer in behalf of having the refuse from his company mess given to her pigs; and the great sympathy that welled up in his generous heart for her poverty and her doubled toil—these are matters of which the millions of letters that passed the censor said little; but they were clean, healthy interests, and made both his life and hers easier in a trying time.

#### THE EVENING FRENCH LESSON

The most approved method of courtship, however, was the French lesson. This usually began at half past seven and lasted until the call to quarters. It was well chaperoned. Not only did the elderly women of the teacher's family hover near, but all the children, the grandfather, and perhaps a crippled brother or two, courteously consented to lend their presence to the cheerful party.

Teacher and pupil generally sat in the doorway of the billet, with their feet resting on the cobblestones of the village street. The teacher would hold in her lap a French-English grammar—a book which most French girls managed to procure from somewhere as soon as America declared war—and would ask questions out of it. The pupil never understood the questions, and his first answer was sure to be incor-

rect; but the teacher was a marvel of patience, and made signs which were finally understood.

As the weeks wore on, it became easier to understand each other. She soon learned what French words he knew, and managed to speak using only them. Owing to the cordial interest of the chaperons, the custom came in vogue of writing messages back and forth on the fly-leaves of the grammar. Untrained though the teacher might be in the fine arts of pedagogy, this correspondence method of instruction produced wonderful results.

The French lesson became an institution in our village, just the same as reveille, retreat, and platoon drill. There was one difficulty, however—the fact that there were many more soldiers than the available French teachers; and classes of more than one were unpoplar.

#### THE LOYALTY OF THE PEASANT GIRLS

This situation, one might say, was all to the advantage of the teachers, who might, if they wished, have had a different pupil each evening, thus getting more variety and enjoying more of the spice of life. But do not misjudge these simple peasant girls. They were very deliberate in their choice of a pupil, but, once chosen, he was it. They never trifled. A corporal or even a sergeant might attempt to usurp a humble private's place as the pupil of some particularly capable teacher; but were his credentials ever so good and his personal attractions ever so superior to those of his intended victim, he never succeeded in displacing him. The loyalty of these girls was splendid.

The battalion was composed of three companies, D, E, and F. Before long strong partizanship developed among the villagers as to the relative merits of the several units. As billeting officer, I seldom went out with the troops to drill, but remained all day in the village. Passing the fountain, which was the open-air clubhouse of the village, I was surprised to overhear among the women around the coping violent disputes as to the standing and achievements of the three companies. Politics in Indiana were put to shame. When a Frenchwoman likes a man, she espouses his entire cause—his squad, his platoon, his company—over and against all comers.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, at the hour of retreat, it was our custom to hold the

ceremony of battalion parade on the lawn of the village château. These parades were gala occasions. The entire village turned out in its best and lined up behind the reviewing officer. When the time came for the field-music to play "To the Colors," "La Marseillaise" was added as a compliment to the assembled guests. When the command to pass in review was given, the companies successively marched in company front past the major, and at the command "Eyes right!" pupils looked straight into the proud eyes of their French teachers.

Following battalion parades, ever since there were such things, it has been the custom of officers, at mess, to wrangle among themselves as to which company had the best line when it passed the major. Lines at parade have always been a sporting proposition with the soldier. Many a first sergeant has gone to the mat over the subject with the first sergeant of the next company. But all the controversies that tradition records have never excelled those held on this subject by the women around the village fountain. Those whose pupils and lodgers were in Company F maintained to the sword's point that Company F's line was perfect. The others claimed the same for their protégés. There you had it. Bitter feuds broke out in the village over it, and the subject had to be taken to the major for arbitration.

Interior guard duty, usually a dreaded ordeal, was popular with the soldier in a billet village. It meant that he stayed in town all day, walking up and down the street, dressed up, and armed with his rifle, his bayonet, and the authority of a sentinel. He liked especially to be on the honor post in front of headquarters, where the sentinel walks his post at attention and does a correct about-face at each end. His French teacher was sure to be watching from her work somewhere, and no one makes a better impression than a sentinel walking his post at attention.

#### THE SIMPLE LIFE FOR OUR SOLDIERS

The billets themselves were generally the lofts of the sheds, or now and then a vacant room in the house proper. They were scattered all through the village, with a squad of about eight men occupying a billet. The troops slept on their bed-sacks, which were filled with straw. Often these were placed on top of the hay in the loft, making a bed as soft as one could wish. The men washed

and shaved at the brook that flowed through the village, and bathed at the dam that widened the stream a half-mile above.

They often fished in this stream, which was swift and clear, and brought back strings of trout to their French teachers. Sometimes the French teachers went with them, chaperoned by children. On Sunday afternoons, in particular, they went on picnics and excursions into the woods. Sometimes—as on the 14th of July, the French national holiday—they induced the mayor to authorize a municipal hunt. On that occasion they went deep into the dense forests in search of the wild boar. Signs of him are often seen in the outskirts of Vosges villages, where he makes his nightly raids on the patches of grain and potatoes. On this hunt, plenty of deer—*forbidden game*—were seen, and one evil-tusked boar, which made his escape. On a later occasion a pig was bagged.

#### THE GOOD WINE OF FRANCE

Thus the billets furnished much of sport, adventure, romance, and domestic interest to the soldiers. Without them there would have been more gambling, more grumbling, and more "*battles of vin blanc*," or wine parties. As to these last, it is remarkable that there was so little indulgence, with good wine selling at three francs a quart, and no rule against drinking it as long as sobriety prevailed.

During my time as billeting officer, there was only one case of a soldier getting positively drunk. Fearing that their privileges would be withdrawn, the offender's fellows asked his captain not to let the case go to court martial, but to allow them to deal with it themselves. The request being granted, they took the inebriate to the bathing-hole in the creek and threw him repeatedly into the cold water, with his clothes on.

Wine was sometimes imbibed at the doorstep French lessons, but less, much less, than the unfortunates who did not have French teachers drank in the cafés to console themselves. These unlucky fellows were called "*orphans*" by the others. But even the orphans were very moderate, when one considers that these men had been for a year in training, with military and civil laws combining to forbid them to touch anything alcoholic, and that here, of a sudden, all rules were called off and plenty of wine was at hand. Many men, of course,



never drank it at all. At the most, a squad would drop into a café after evening mess, spend all evening drinking a quart of wine among them, and then go back to their billet, where it was forbidden to carry bottles with them.

The war seemed a long way off from this peaceful spot. Forty miles behind the trenches, only faintly on clear nights could one hear the guns from the direction of Verdun. But the news from the front was posted in French and English on the bulletin-board in front of the mayor's house, and there, in the evening, before French lessons began, teachers, pupils, chaperons, and orphans would congregate to read the despatches.

Sometimes, when the news was especially exciting—as when the story of Château-Thierry was posted—the chaperons forgot their charges in the discussions that followed. At such times the French class would steal back unnoticed to its door-step, and hold its session with spoken words instead of written messages on the fly-leaves. A few of the most enthusiastic students considered that this was a good opportunity to acquire the proper method of holding the lips in pronouncing the difficult letter “u” in French—which is well known to be a stumbling-block in the language, requiring patient practise to master.

#### THE SUMMONS TO THE FRONT

But the day came when the chapter of billets ended, and the chapter of trenches began. The boys were not sorry, of course, but willing and eager, to go to the front; nevertheless, there were partings at the billet doors that burned into the hearts of

many. No doubt these good French people felt something of the same pang at parting with their American friends that they had felt three years earlier, when their own blue-coated sons had marched away to stop the invader at the Marne; and many of the soldiers recalled their own feelings of a year before, when they left their Western homes. Everything was nearer and more real now, when the trucks were waiting that would whirl them off in four hours or so to the firing-line.

Naturally, partings between teachers and pupils were especially hard. No doubt a few broken hearts rode away and a few remained behind. It had happened before in all these villages. Many soldiers had come and gone since the war began. For the men, the great adventure was but a few hours away. For the women—well, tired shoulders were shrugged, and patient lips repeated the words that so often expressed the stoic philosophy of the French people throughout the sacrifices of their long trial:

“*C'est la guerre!*”

Do not imagine that all the Americans in France had French teachers, or made love to Frenchwomen. And, women of America, do not hold it against those who did so in the approved and proper method of the village billet. Their souls were not defiled thereby. The village *patronnes* were good people who knew the soldier's heart. The chapter of billets is a bright, clean chapter in the story of our army abroad, and the thought of some pleasant village in the Vosges or the Haute Marne, with its sunny kindness, will do much to offset the worst horrors of war in many an American soldier's memory.

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#### THE FOOTSTEP

Out in the hall a quiet step I heard;  
The door swung open wide, yet naught I saw.  
I turned, impatient, to the book in hand,  
When once again a footstep—on the stairs.  
It must be true, no idle fantasy  
To mock one like a sweet remembered dream,  
Illusion's trick to soothe the strain of grief.

Again I listened, but it came no more—  
The footstep heard so oft in other days,  
As lovingly each household task was done—  
A footstep now can haunt the memory,  
When once how heedless were we of the sound!

A. S. Isaacs

# Brokers in Adventure<sup>\*</sup>

A ROMANCE OF LIGHTEST FIFTH AVENUE AND DARKEST AFRICA

By George Agnew Chamberlain

Author of "Home," "Taxi," "White Man," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LEE CONREY

MR. CHARLES HARLOW, an ex-athlete who has grown fat and flabby in his pursuit of mammon, is visited in his office one day by his old college chum, Flange Rordon, who, thanks to an outdoor life in the wild places of the world, is still brimful of strength and vigor. He reproaches Harlow for becoming a sordid money-grubber, and by way of emphasizing his statement that Harlow is no longer a real man, but only a soft ball of putty, proceeds to "wipe up the floor" with him.

The "wiping" concluded to Rordon's satisfaction and Harlow's bruised discomfiture, the old friends repair to Rordon's hotel, from which invitations are phoned to several of the old college coterie. Ten good fellows foregather that night at the Aspic roof-garden.

In the midst of their somewhat unconventional frolic, an aristocratic, extremely independent, and quite good-looking cousin of Harlow's, Miss Helen Pelter Hume, is attracted by Rordon's joviality and cave-mannish appearance, and asks to be permitted to join the gathering. Harlow politely informs her that the party is a stag one, but Rordon says: "Aw, let the kid sit down, Charlie," and forthwith Miss Hume joins the celebrators. When Rordon and Harlow speak of going to Africa on a shooting expedition, she insists upon accompanying them.

After a free-for-all fight with the waiters, Harlow, Rordon, and Miss Hume escape together in a taxi. But at her home the high-spirited girl, still bent upon accompanying the two men to Africa, refuses to alight. So they secure a suite for her at Rordon's hotel and bid her good night.

## IV

UPON reaching Mr. Rordon's apartment, Mr. Harlow naturally thought that sleep was the next thing on a rather crowded program, and threw himself full-length on the bed, his drowsy mind running on the ancient formula to the effect that possession is nine-tenths of the law. To his surprise Mr. Rordon did not attempt to dispossess him, but made straight for the phone and succeeded in connecting himself with a person named Jake, of the New York *Harbinger* night staff.

"You, Jake? Flange Rordon talking. Sorry, but it can't be done, Jake. I'm on my way—on my way. Yes! No, I'm not interested in anything still at the docks. What's at quarantine? What? Mauretania? Thanks awfully, Jake. Sure! I'll do that, you helping, old scout, and we'll get ten minutes together into the bargain. Battery in half an hour to the dot!"

"Say, has your tongue got the willies?" asked Mr. Harlow sleepily.

The next moment he was lying full-length on the floor, and Mr. Rordon's two battered leather trunks had taken his place on the bed. Into them their owner proceeded to transfer his scattered belongings at a speed and with an accuracy which evidenced system in conjunction with long experience.

"Roll out of my way, will you?" he growled at Mr. Harlow. "We're sailing on the *Mauretania* at six sharp from the Lower Bay. The *Harbinger* tug is going to run us out."

"You're crazy!" said Mr. Harlow, by this time wide awake. "D'you think I can go aboard the *Mauretania* looking like this?"

Mr. Rordon paused in his labors long enough to glance down at his rebellious captive. Any one capable of hearing the shouting of reason would have agreed with Mr. Harlow, whose face presented strange hues as of a rainbow reversed. Somber instead of joyous were its colors, but equally varied, so that they suggested a new spec-

<sup>\*</sup> Copyright, 1919, by George Agnew Chamberlain—This story began in the May number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

trum in embryo, substituting for the arc of promise a backward vista on a storm that had passed. The fragments of clothing that still clung to his person defy description in detail.

Mr. Rordon, having made up his mind, was not amenable to reason.

"Charlie," he said, "we scarcely have time for further—er—words, but if you insist I will undertake to persuade you into thinking that I am quite right as to my conclusion in regard to our leaving the Battery for the Mauretania within thirty minutes. Get up, you jellyfish! Put on your own clothes, and I'll lend you a cap. Now get me, and get me quick, or by the imperial swordfish, I'll carry you aboard stark naked!"

"Oh, all right," said Mr. Harlow, rising. "Don't get excited, Flange. Don't wear yourself out. Save your strength, old man, for I warn you that the day is coming when the world will ask again: 'Who killed Cock Robin?'"

On time to the minute, Mr. Rordon, having settled his own account, paid for a night's lodging for the unsuspecting Miss Hume, secured a cab, and transferred into it all his worldly belongings plus the recently acquired Mr. Harlow, arrived at the Battery, and boarded the famous *Harbinger's* no less renowned news-tug, where he was boisterously received by the aforementioned Jake.

"Flange," said that individual as the craft cast off its moorings, "this lending around of the old man's most disreputable private yacht to fugitives from inhospitable shores needs a justification, which you are now going to supply. Watchman, what of the night on the Aspic roof? Come on, now; give us the true dope!"

"Why, it was this way, Jake," replied Mr. Rordon promptly, thereby proving his firm belief in the old maxim, "When you've got something to hide, never hesitate." "I was sitting with a few friends, trying to eat a quiet evening meal, when a man at the next table began to hold his pasty face before my eyes wherever I looked. I spoke to him about it, and no doubt he would have made some remark in reply if it hadn't been for Mr. Harlow here—Mr. Charles Harlow, of William Street and maritime law."

"Glad to meetcha," said Jake, with a pitying but impersonal glance at Mr. Harlow, who was already cringing from the

notoriety which he felt would bar him from Manhattan for years to come.

"Mr. Harlow," continued Mr. Rordon in a voice as cold as the dawn, "saw fit to stand up and sing a song. Everything that happened thereafter, of which you are doubtless fully informed, was a wholly inevitable sequel. If you could get him to sing for you—"

Jake held up his hand in interruption.

"No, Flange, no. I can see how the whole thing came about, and I can only say that I think you're a dead-game sport to stick by your friend and go to all this trouble to get him out of the country."

It was a thoroughly subdued Mr. Harlow who followed Mr. Rordon to a comfortable stateroom, one down from the main deck, and stayed there for three consecutive days. At the end of that time, having surveyed his recuperated face in the mirror, he sent for the barber. On the strength of pocket-money supplied to him by his friend in trouble, he had a shave and secured various necessary articles of apparel, among them a natty pair of flannel trousers and a seagoing cap, which went well enough with the coat that was the sole relic of his own once extensive wardrobe.

Thus adorned, he appeared on deck and sought out Mr. Rordon.

"Flange," he said, "I feel fine."

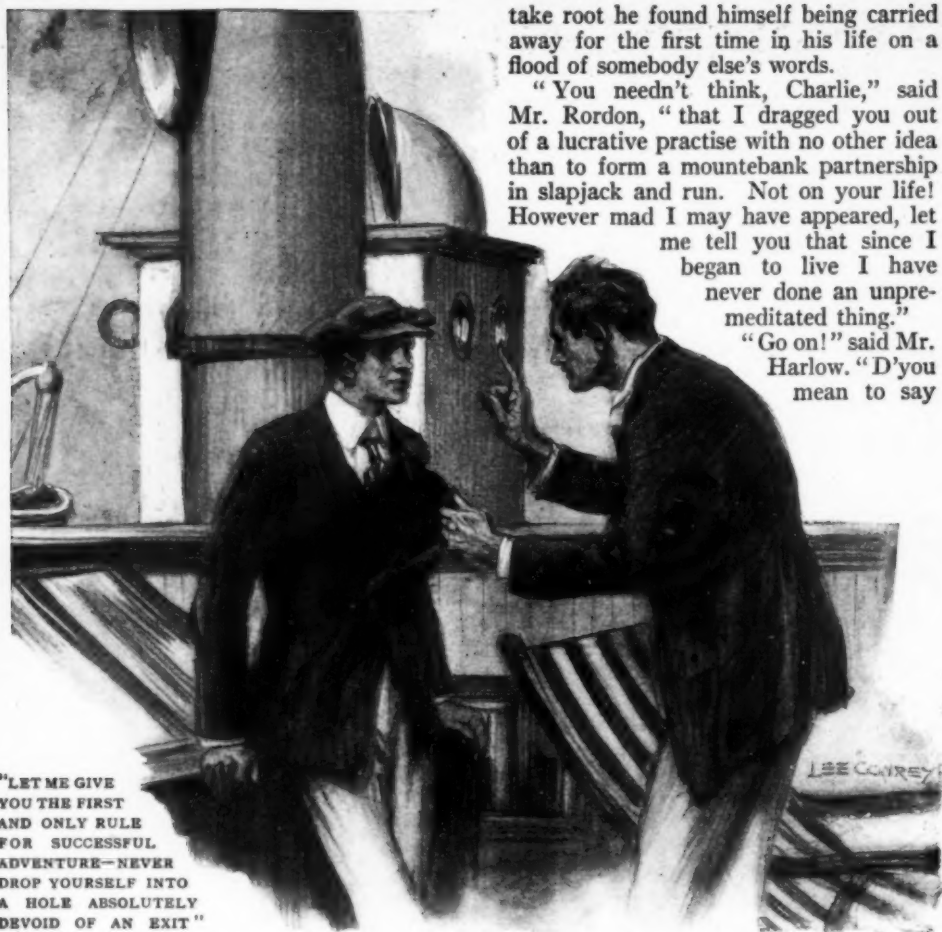
"So do I, Charlie," replied Mr. Rordon.

"Would you like a game of shuffleboard?"

"No, I wouldn't," answered Mr. Harlow, after a thoughtful pause. "You've kind of spoiled my taste for lily-handed exercise. I've been thinking over the few hours we spent together in New York, and I've come up to thank you like a little man for the benefactions I received in such a churlish manner from your hands. I mean it, Flange. I've got an entirely new palate for life as you see it. Lying in my bunk down there it overpowered me. If you feel like I do, let's start something!"

His eyes wandered speculatively up and down the promenade deck. Mr. Rordon rose precipitously from his *chaise longue* and grasped Mr. Harlow's arm firmly above the elbow.

"Listen to me, Charlie," he began. "Just let me give you the first and only rule for successful adventure—never drop yourself into a hole absolutely devoid of an exit. It doesn't matter if your getaway is a hundred to one against, as long as you have some faint odor of a chance—see?"



"LET ME GIVE  
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take root he found himself being carried away for the first time in his life on a flood of somebody else's words.

"You needn't think, Charlie," said Mr. Rordon, "that I dragged you out of a lucrative practise with no other idea than to form a mountebank partnership in slapjack and run. Not on your life! However mad I may have appeared, let me tell you that since I began to live I have never done an unpremeditated thing."

"Go on!" said Mr. Harlow. "D'you mean to say

Now, unless you think you can swim to Queenstown and get there ahead of the wireless, just stifle that hunger for riot."

"All right," said Mr. Harlow with a sigh. "That's always the way with life," he added. "As soon as you get a taste for a thing, you mustn't. What have you got all those dress-suits for if we're not going to use 'em up?"

"What you don't know about life," rejoined Mr. Rordon, "would make a fill of the Atlantic. Come along and do a mile. I want to talk to you."

They fell into step, and Mr. Rordon proceeded to expound. It took Mr. Harlow a full minute to realize that his friend at sea was an entirely new acquaintance—that usually awful thing, an earnest person. At the first suspicion of the truth he was disgusted, but before his prejudice could quite

that you came into my office with the idea of beating me up all formed in your mind?"

"There are degrees in premeditation," replied Mr. Rordon calmly. "What I mean by the term, to give you an example, is that I never hit a man without making up my mind where. That may sound a bit trivial, but let me tell you that as a result of the omission of just that small measure of premeditation more running game has been shot at and missed than has ever fallen to expert guns. But, to get back to our corned-beef hash, let me inform you that I have outlined for you an entire course in the new education."

"What do you mean, the new education?" asked Mr. Harlow.

"I mean this," said Mr. Rordon. "Adventure is not the haphazard gift of the gods that most written tales make it out to



be. It's an exact science with a definite goal. Its science consists in yanking a man out of his original rut, and then lifting him rapidly out of all the successive ruts that make up existence until he moves on a free plane of spontaneous volition. That last stage is the ideal, of course—the apparently possible unattainable."

Harlow turned his head and stared at Rordon's face, which held for the moment the rapt and somewhat wistful look of one who has his eyes fixed on a distant promised land.

"Every live science," he commented seriously, to his own surprise, "has a prospective and an immediate goal."

"You're right," said Rordon, smiling and coming back to himself. "The immediate goal of adventure is the new education—the training of a man's palate in contact with the universe. The trouble with us Americans is that in the midst of a plenty never before equaled in the world's history we starve. We've learned to make money, we've learned to produce, but when it comes to lapping up the resulting milk and honey, why, it's kismet—a blank, a void, a cessation, instead of a reward to the gourmet. Which, by the way, suggests an example."

"Yes," remarked Mr. Harlow. "You'd better draw a map."

"Well," complied Mr. Rordon, "take the Aspic roof. It has, I confidently believe, the most complete cuisine on this planet, and yet, if you'll just go there a few nights running and note the viands placed before the *habitués*, you'll get a shock. What do you think it was enraged me with that man the other night? His pasty face? Not on your life! If he had ordered *filet de sole* under a *sauce aux Rois de Navarre*, accompanied by the right tone of modest Chablis, and had followed it with two boned quail frozen in aspic and stuffed with truffles, I could have smiled at him. What got my goat was the fact that he was eating the same steak and hashed-browned that I saw him facing nine years ago in the grill of the old Gilsey."

"Porterhouse and hashed-browned are pretty good eating, just the same," murmured Mr. Harlow.

"You bet they are," agreed Mr. Rordon; "but not when you take them night after night, not because they are royal aliment, but because you don't know enough to ask for something else. And that's the way it is with the *menus* of life. They take know-

ing, for it isn't every man who can wish himself an exciting hour in intelligible prayer; but once learned, the gods of adventure are ready to deliver according to specifications."

"Do you really believe that, Flange?" asked Mr. Harlow hopefully.

"I do," said Mr. Rordon. "I can even tell you what you're going to get in yours. You start with a rough-house such as we enjoyed in your office. That's the lowest form of adventure known to man. It's like steak and hashed-browned—awfully good, but you can always get it by punching any man of about your size in the stomach. Next in order comes inciting to riot. You've had that, too. After it, escape from the pursuing female—"

He suddenly paused.

"What's the matter, Flange?" asked Mr. Harlow.

"I withdraw my last words," replied Mr. Rordon gravely. "It has just occurred to me that the hart with bloodshot eyes, dripping with sweat, straining every tendon, bursting its lungs to reach deep water ahead of the hounds, isn't exactly having an adventure."

"Oh, come, Flange!" said Mr. Harlow. "Aren't you a bit hard on Helen? She didn't put us through all that."

"No, she didn't," agreed Mr. Rordon. "They seldom do—in the first lap."

"Is she on this boat?" asked Mr. Harlow in sudden alarm.

"No," said Mr. Rordon.

"Oh, well, then, forget it," said Mr. Harlow. "Forget it and go on."

"Adventure," resumed Mr. Rordon with an effort, "is not all slap, splash, pull your gun and fire. Its essence is contrast. As a result, a quiet inn, anchored to a dreamy landscape, can be a distinct adventure to a man issuing from turmoil. So can a sunrise, or a sound, or a smell, or—a crumpled hair-ribbon, or—"

"Yes, go on," said Mr. Harlow hastily. "I'm beginning to get you."

"Let's put it in this way," continued Mr. Rordon. "Adventure consists in reversing your engine with frequency, on the principle of the climbing switchback. Rough-house and a riot; reverse, and you get a peaceful inn and an unforgettable hour with a friend. As for the upward progression, I give you only the high lights—torn clothes and bloody noses; the projection of the body through space on anything from the

Empire State Express to a leaking dugout and brand-new horizons; actual hunger and subsequent repletion; filthiness before a hot bath; fatigue followed by twenty-four hours of sleep without a break; a long look at the near face of death and then safety, still,


As for dreams," he concluded, "I said dreams because they illustrate, better than anything more tangible, that free plane of spontaneous volition which I mentioned as the apparently possible unattainable. Man tastes absolute freedom only in visions; they are consequently the highest form of adventure."

"Now that we're back to where we started from," said Mr. Harlow, "let's have a drink."

Beginning with that talk, a new era of unbroken amity opened before Mr. Rordon and his prize of war. The two conversed together by the hour, generally on the science of avoiding boredom through direct application of the intellect as a lever with which to lift life out of its succeeding ruts. Gradually they came to perceive that they were mutually inclined to embark on a not ignoble mission, namely, the purveying of adventure to themselves and others in wholesale lots.

In this mood they arrived at the city of London, and proceeded to that ancient caravansary—now, alas, no more—known as the Tavistock. Upon entering its dingy precincts Mr. Harlow felt himself translated to an age of which he had occasionally read in song and story, but with which he had never hoped to have physical contact. The atmosphere of the place was one of old ale, as if in some bygone time the entire edifice, from cellar to attic, had been consecrated to the preservation in perpetuity of that beverage in the wood.

Some bard in prose will doubtless write sooner or later the biography of this outstanding personality among the inns of a dying world, but the rapidity of the sequence of events still to be chronicled in this history makes it impossible to give more than a glimpse of the sturdy old coign of stand-pattism. Suffice it to say, that up to its dying day no patron ever saw so gross



"CHARLIE,"  
HE SAID, "SINCE  
DARWIN WROTE  
THE 'ORIGIN OF SPECIES'  
NO MORE INTERESTING  
EVOLUTION HAS DEVELOPED  
THAN THAT OF THE SPORTING RIFLE"

warm, apparently eternal; and, finally, at the top of the heap, dreams of fair women and love!"

"Why dreams?" asked Mr. Harlow.

"That's a fairly comprehensive course in adventure," proceeded Mr. Rordon, apparently unconscious of the interruption. "I don't say it leaves nothing out—for instance, it doesn't even enter the realms of ambition—but I contend it could fill a year in a man's life as full as a week-old tick.

an innovation as a cup with a handle within its portals, though centuries witnessed a million servings of generous "dishes" of tea.

Having been assigned, together with Mr. Rordon, to a room with two beds, but little else in the way of posthistoric conveniences, Mr. Harlow opened the casement and looked out upon a view that gave him further pause.

"I say, Flange," he remarked at length, "I thought we were in London!"

"So we are," replied Mr. Rordon, who was rapidly unpacking only those things which he thought he would require. "This is the very Midlothian heart of the greatest city in the world."

"You mean largest," corrected Mr. Harlow patriotically. "And even so, I think you must have missed your bearings by about six miles. Do you realize that I've got my eyes fixed on a barn-yard?"

"It isn't a barn-yard," said Mr. Rordon. "It's Covent Garden."

"Covent Garden!" gasped Mr. Harlow. "Oh, shades of opera, dancing-halls of fame, banks of sweet-smelling violets, jonquils, hyacinths, tuberose, hothouse pines, and wall peaches! Covent Garden? Flange, I faint. Lend me your smelling-salts, for there's a rural wain laden with manure passing at this moment!"

"What you need is food on an empty stomach," replied Mr. Rordon. "Come on! You don't even have to worry about your clothes. That's the greatest of the many comforts of London, Charlie. Everybody realizes without looking up, let alone turning around to stare, that you wear whatever you happen to have on because it darned well suits your convenience. Everything and anything goes."

"I can believe you," said Mr. Harlow, still absorbed by the dingy outlook from the window.

They descended into a shadowy refectory, where everything was heavy—the air, the chairs, the weathered-oak tables, the crockery, the smells of food, and even the sprinkling of sawdust on the floor.

"Charlie," said Mr. Rordon as they seated themselves, "you remember what I said about the omnipotence of the cuisine of the Aspic? Well, here we have its exact antithesis. Do not, however, be dismayed, for the antithesis is absolute, and wherever you encounter the absolute you find grandeur. You have doubtless heard of those

Western strongholds of Americanism where an inquirer for a cocktail is admonished, at the wrong end of a gun, to take his whisky straight and in a tin cup?"

"Yes, I've read about 'em," agreed Mr. Harlow.

"Well," continued Mr. Rordon, "that spirit is merely a chip from this old block. Upon these boards no viands but the beef and mutton of old England, accompanied by potatoes, beans, and cabbage, washed down by weighty ale, and followed by the heaviest of puddings known to man, have ever made their debut. History records an attempt to introduce spinach shortly before the Napoleonic wars, and if you are sufficiently interested you can measure the resulting outburst in the letter-columns of the *Times* for 1796."

"I'll take your word for it," said Mr. Harlow absently, his eyes fixed on the monster dome of a silver covered dish on a barrow, which was descending upon them in the custody of a red-faced giant, capped and clothed in white linen, who bore in his right hand what appeared to be a simitar, but was in reality nothing but a carving-knife of proportions appropriate to the rest of the cortège.

When the cover of the silver trencher was lifted, Mr. Harlow forgot all minor interests in dumb admiration of the mightiest round of beef he had ever beheld. Its colors, shading from brown-and-gold to deep red, were a symphony, its size was nothing less than stupendous, while its steaming juices reminded one of a lake of rubies touched by sun through the mists of a hot summer morn.

"A bit of the crisp, please," murmured Mr. Rordon to the carver as he laid down the small tip sanctioned and also hallowed by generations of usage.

There followed a long vocal silence, during which the two friends took on and trimmed within their bunkers a vast store of the only staples of life recognized by the complacent hostelry. When at last they were forced to tally every crevice filled, and to register an end even to seepage accommodation for the ale remaining in the huge tankards before them, Mr. Rordon proposed a walk.

Mr. Harlow shook his head in denial.

"If you say smoke," he remarked huskily, "I'm with you, but as to walking during the impending present, nay!" He added the following strangely prophetic words:

"Flange, I've been filled with concrete and sunk!"

## V

DURING their meal the room had become thickly studded with men only, to several of whom Mr. Rordon casually nodded. Mr. Harlow gradually perceived that all of these acquaintances, in spite of the fact that each retained a distinct individuality, bore themselves with an air of modest independence and seemed to share with Mr. Rordon and one another the impression of an almost visible halo, a badge, a sort of circular emblem of a habit of gyration around the world. One of them finally passed near enough for a verbal salute.

"Do?" he remarked.

"Fine," replied Mr. Rordon to the abbreviated salutation. "How's Borneo?"

"Rotten!"

"Look at this bunch, Charlie," said Mr. Rordon. "Did you ever see a meeker, milkier-eyed crowd in your life? That's because they're in London, for let me assure you that the great majority of the lot I have nodded to are roaring bulls on their own far-away heaths. Atmosphere is certainly one funny thing. There's Hamm over there—the fellow in the gray suit, gray hair, gray eyes, and a dismal, gray, drooping manner."

"I've got him," said Mr. Harlow. "Looks like a mouse getting ready to nibble a cheese on the sly."

"Exactly," said Mr. Rordon. "Well, throughout the length and breadth of the Straits Settlements, from Singapore to Balom, from Sabah to Kuala Kuantan, he's known as Hollering Hamm. Everybody gets out of his way except the women, who often wish they had. You can't escape the psychological depths of certain old sayings, and 'cock of his own walk' is one of them."

"What about that silent person who spoke to you?" asked Mr. Harlow with awakening interest.

"Him?" replied Mr. Rordon readily. "His name is Biggs, and he's the right-hand man of a certain native king. His sole instructions are to defeat any further encroachment on the royal realm. While he's on the job he's a pillar of fire, a tornado, and a snake in the grass; when he's in London, one of the few places on earth where he's quite safe, he walks in fear and trembling."

"I don't see any one around here exactly shaking with the ague of funk," said Mr. Harlow.

"That's because the Tavistock is sanctuary," explained Mr. Rordon. "It's so old, so fixed, so immutable in its ancient demands, that men coming back from years of wilderness or strange lands make for it instinctively. This tavern is for them not only the tangible embodiment of sturdy and unvarying England, but a shock-absorber which intervenes between the return of the native and a thousand disconcerting changes. Let's follow the first of the tribe that moves."

No sooner were the words out of his mouth than a florid individual arose at the end of the room and made for the door.

"There goes Sharpless," said Rordon. "Come on! Let's follow him."

When they emerged into Piccadilly, the Fifth Avenue of London, Mr. Harlow drew his lungs full of gasoline fumes, smiled in delectation, and closed his eyes.

"My native air!" he murmured. "Watch me cross with my eyes shut."

"No, you don't," said Mr. Rordon. "Watch Sharpless instead."

The florid individual gazed in frank dismay at the traffic, walked nervously a few steps up the street and back again, and then waited patiently till Moses, in the form of a cop, raised his potent hand and stemmed the threatening flood. Mr. Sharpless crossed cringing, with fearful eyes glancing to right and left. Once he had gained the farther shore he proceeded to the show-windows of the Jungle. With his eyes on the many trophies of the chase displayed therein he became a new man, erect and fiery-eyed.

"Flange," said Mr. Harlow, impressed, "did you see him stop in anywhere for a pick-me-up?"

Rordon laughed.

"The pick-me-up is in the window, Charlie. Sharpless is himself and cock of the walk the minute he can connect with the atmosphere of big game. He's got a private collection inside that will make your mouth water. Come along and meet him."

A moment later the florid gentleman was startled by a touch on the elbow.

"Good Lord, Rordon!" he exclaimed, "why don't you look where you're going? I thought you were a bus."

"Sharpless," said Mr. Rordon, "this is my friend Harlow. We're on our way to



look over your lot of trophies. Mr. Harlow is a well-known New York sportsman, and holds the record of Manhattan for spearing maraschino cherries with a straw."

Mr. Sharpless nodded to Mr. Harlow and looked him over curiously.

"You chaps," he remarked pessimistically, "are ruining all the hunter's illusions of danger. You go down to British East and rope rhinos, then you start treeing leopards with a bunch of curs, and lately I have heard that you're running down lions with Ford cars. Now this new harpooning game inclines one to despise the maraschino—did you say cherry?"

Mr. Harlow turned a deep red and stared belligerently into Mr. Sharpless's eyes, but they met his gaze with such pellucid innocence that he was constrained to acquit the florid one of malice. He turned and moved toward the entrance to the Jungle.

"Come on, Sharpless!" said Rordon. "Take another look at them; it will do you good."

"I believe it will," said Mr. Sharpless. "The truth is, Rordon, I've been feeling depressed."

The three passed through the famous taxidermist establishment and into the basement, where one-half of a wall was occupied by a collection of record heads, bounded by four monster elephant tusks. Into Mr. Rordon's face sprang an expression of expert admiration, into Mr. Harlow's one of envy qualified by awe. Sharpless's eyes swam with a quarter of a century's memories, superimposed, but never conflicting.

"Eh, Rordon!" he murmured. "The buffalo there. Threatened the greatest friendship a man ever had, and then knitted it closer than before. You remember?"

"Remember!" exclaimed Rordon.

Harlow stared at the buffalo's head in question. Never had he seen anything to equal its concentrated weight and power, or the malignancy, saved by the skill of an artist, to its wicked, bloodshot eyes. The horns, encrusted to tremendous thickness at the brows, swept down, out, and up, giving an impression of unlimited dominance and untamable pride. Below the head was a small brass plate carrying the inscription:

Sharpless and Latimer  
Crocodile River, June 22, 1898.

"What happened, Flange?" he asked.

"The buffalo—a record, by the way," said Rordon, even as he laid a hand on

Sharpless's shoulder to prevent his running away, "charged Sharpless and his pal Latimer, and fell dead at ten yards. They both claimed the shot—they both were sure they couldn't possibly have missed,—but there was just the one hole between the beast's eyes. It was a record head—the sort of head a man would take and die happy the next minute."

Mr. Rordon paused and studied Sharpless's rapt face out of slanted eyes.

"So," he continued, "they finally agreed to draw lots as to which should kill the other and take the trophy."

Sharpless jumped out of his trance as if he had been shot.

"Who told you *that*?" he growled. "Not Latimer, surely? I certainly never did, and, for the Lord's sake, don't tell me it was Latimer!"

"Easy, old man!" said Rordon with a smile. "You both would have told me eventually, even if I hadn't got it from the natives. What else could you two have possibly done? And where have you been hibernating that you have forgotten that Africa can't keep a secret?"

"That's true," said Sharpless, cracking his knuckles one after the other and looking anywhere but in Rordon's eyes. "Old friends we were, too," he murmured. "Old friends!"

"Can you see it, Charlie?" asked Rordon. "Of course you can't, so I'll show you. It happened in a dip just off the dry bed of a donga. Short grass studded with clumps of thorn. From behind one of them came the buffalo in the most terrifying rush known to man—it's so wholly vindictive, pitiless, and calculating. Actually smells of brimstone, like an alliance of lightning and storm. They both fired, and the bull dropped. The natives asked for another half-dozen shots, and were refused. The two white men drew near and saw the one bullet-hole.

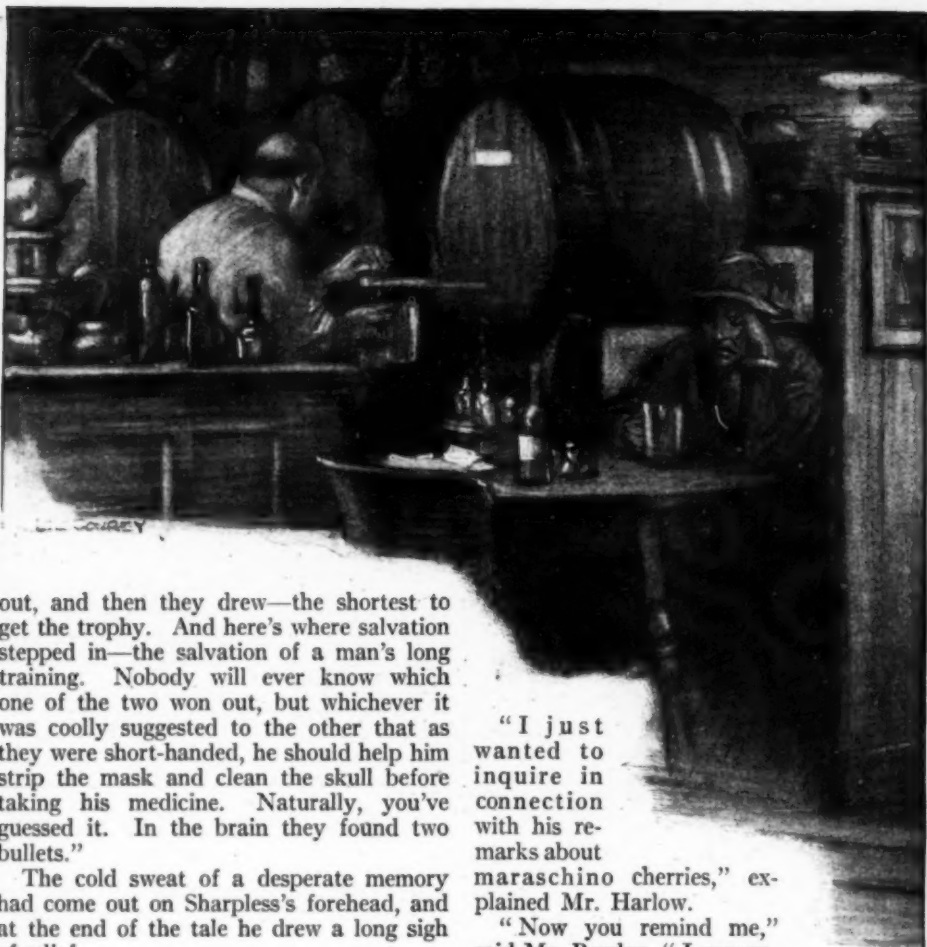
"I got him," says Sharpless, and like a quick echo, "I got him," came from Latimer, and there you are!"

Sharpless nodded his head sadly.

"There was friendly remonstrance, then argument," continued Rordon, "and finally each plucked a straw—wasn't it straws, Sharpless?"

Sharpless nodded again.

"Each got a straw, and they dropped them down the barrel of a rifle. They rolled it softly until two yellow ends just peeped



out, and then they drew—the shortest to get the trophy. And here's where salvation stepped in—the salvation of a man's long training. Nobody will ever know which one of the two won out, but whichever it was coolly suggested to the other that as they were short-handed, he should help him strip the mask and clean the skull before taking his medicine. Naturally, you've guessed it. In the brain they found two bullets."

The cold sweat of a desperate memory had come out on Sharpless's forehead, and at the end of the tale he drew a long sigh of relief.

"I'll tell you why I'm depressed before I go, Rordon," he said, "if it won't bore you."

"Shoot!" said Rordon sympathetically.

"Well," complied Mr. Sharpless, "it's this way: When I was a boy, I dreamed three times in succession that I would meet my death in being run over by a bus drawn by two fat, white horses. And this is what depresses me. There are no longer any buses drawn by fat horses."

He nodded sadly, and left them before they could recover from a sudden taste of lemon in the mouth.

"Look here, Flange!" said Mr. Harlow, an angry suspicion taking form in his mind. "Is that fellow a humorist?"

"I don't know," said Mr. Rordon blankly, his eyes on Mr. Sharpless's disappearing figure.

"I just wanted to inquire in connection with his remarks about maraschino cherries," explained Mr. Harlow.

"Now you remind me," said Mr. Rordon, "I remember that the first time I met Sharpless he was interim bartender at the Gay Lights on the Yukon."

"What?" gasped Mr. Harlow, and started impulsively for the stairs.

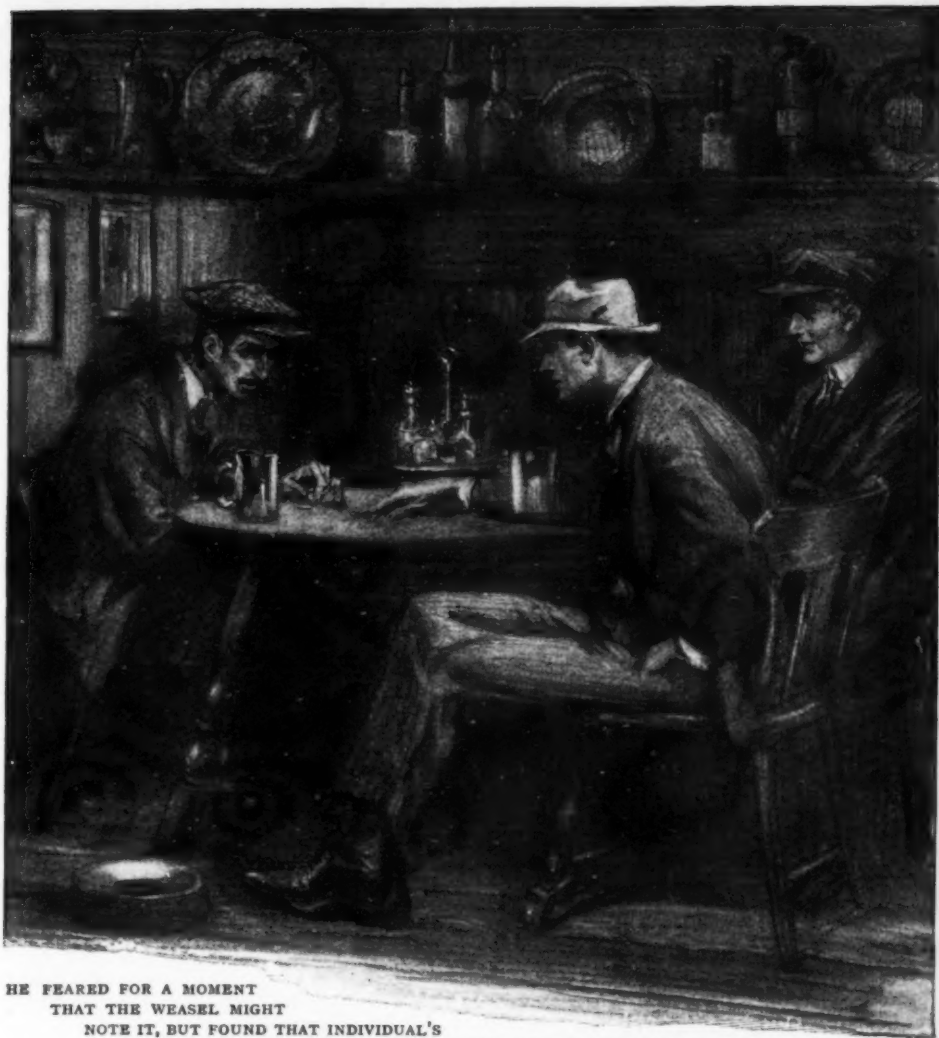
Mr. Rordon caught his arm.

"Charlie," he said, "before you try to talk things over with Sharpless, come and kill a buffalo—a cow, or even a calf."

Mr. Harlow frowned.

"You're right, Flange," he said after a pause. "That's the very thing I should and do want to do. Let's start!"

"Go easy," said Mr. Rordon. "Look around you. I want you to catch the healthiest fever in the world and catch it hard—the fever of the collector of major trophies, for there is no cure-all for the troubles of any individual man like the panacea of big-game shooting."



HE FEARED FOR A MOMENT  
THAT THE WEASEL MIGHT  
NOTE IT, BUT FOUND THAT INDIVIDUAL'S  
EYES ACTUALLY WATERING AT THE CORNERS IN THEIR HUNGRY GAZE ON THE HEAP  
OF GOLD. HE QUICKLY MANEUVERED ANOTHER YELLOW BOY TO THE FRONT

"I believe you, Flange," said Mr. Harlow, looking at him steadily. "I have no troubles, but the fever is now with me. Lead the way!"

Beginning with that moment, and during the next four days, they proceeded to outfit themselves for safari. They began at Mr. Rordon's bank, which, after securing itself in four directions and two dimensions, condescended to cash Mr. Harlow's check for a moderate amount. From there they went to a tailor, who contracted to supply Mr. Harlow with various suits at the rate of one for every six hours, elapsed time.

About these items Mr. Rordon was apparently careless, but when it came to fitting Mr. Harlow with a battery, the burden of responsibility weighed him down until he threatened to break under the strain. Mr. Harlow having made various trivial remarks to the effect that any old thing made in America would do, Mr. Rordon led him to a quiet spot and sat him down.

"Charlie," he said, "you're in school; try and learn something. Since Darwin wrote the 'Origin of Species,' no more interesting evolution has developed than that of the sporting rifle. I'll put it in as few

words as possible. I'm just as patriotic as you are, and I'll back the American hand-me-down shotgun against the world for general utility; but when it comes to our sporting rifles I simply recognize fundamental determining causes. There is no strictly dangerous game in America, North or South, and never has been; as a consequence our rifles were originally built to meet a national demand for an excellent article for little money, which could do the work at hand by the aid of the finest shooting eyes God ever gave to a race as a whole.

"But do you know this?" continued Mr. Rordon. "Tell any of the great-in-quantity rifle-makers of the United States that you like his sixteen-dollar weapon, but you want him to add two hundred dollars of real worth to it, for which you'll pay him three hundred, or even a thousand—and will you get it? No. He'll tell you that sixteen dollars' worth of gun is all that is coming to any one man in a standardized world. What's the result? The best sporting rifle ever made in the United States isn't a sporting rifle at all, but an army implement. Now we've come to the evolution of the real sporting battery."

"It is time," said Mr. Harlow.

"There are men living," resumed Mr. Rordon, unheeding, "and old Sharpless is one of them, who have employed the four-bore. You have never seen one, but I'll show you a genuine sample if you'll be careful not to fall down the barrel. The four-bore used black powder, of course, and fired a lead ball about the size of a hen's egg. The method of procedure was to get near enough to an elephant to spit on him, brace yourself between a tree and his hide, and pull the trigger. The result was that you and the tree fell one way, the elephant another, and the gun made a dent in whatever happened to be under it."

"You'll have to show me," decided Mr. Harlow.

"I will, Charlie," said Mr. Rordon more seriously. "I will, because there's nothing that raises man's respect for man like looking at those old smooth-bores—hand-cannons that make you want to sort of bow down before them and the men who carried them across a continent. Three great discoveries marked their passing. One was rifling, another was cordite, and the last was the principle of the needle-gun. The four-bores and eight-bores tumbled to a caliber of .55—a tremendous drop in carrying

weight with an actual rise in effectiveness. Then came smokeless and the needle-gun, and the size went racing down till you find some men to-day swearing by a .22 glorified rook-rifle for all uses—a thing that fires a pin-head for a bullet, outrages all the principles of ballistics, and is most awfully cruel when it doesn't kill outright." He paused, a troubled frown on his brow.

"Well?" asked Mr. Harlow, who was not as bored as his attitude intimated.

"The trouble is that we're almost back to what started me on this tirade," said Mr. Rordon; "back to to-day and the choice of a battery for a greenhorn. You may ask why spend two hundred and up for a rifle that is only slightly better than one for sixteen dollars—just a shade truer, a shade better sighted, a shade more reliable, and a shade cleaner finished than the American article. The answer to that is easy—the survival of the fittest. If you're going up against buffalo, elephant, lion, or even a fool rhino—four contingencies that never have occurred to our padded manufacturers—two hundred dollars is nothing to pay for a mere nuance of added confidence in the gun before the man."

"I can see that," admitted Mr. Harlow.

"Sure you can!" said Mr. Rordon. "You've looked at a stuffed buffalo. Well, to cut the matter short, I can tell you this: There are a dozen makes of hand-made rifles that have attained mechanical perfection. It doesn't make much difference which you buy; but when it comes to saying what calibers you'll need, you're up against a controversy that is now splitting the sporting world in two. My experience is that the extreme needle-gun has flat trajectory, reach, and tremendous penetration, but that it is cruel. By that I mean that unless you hit a vital organ or bone, the game goes clean away. Its stopping power, the great essential in the face of a ton of danger, is negligible. So I'm a reactionary. I stand for penetration balanced with the greatest possible shock. I use a 30-30 for all-round field work, and a double-barreled .45 cordite express for elephant, buffalo, and rhino. But how can I tell what to recommend for you? If I guessed wrong, it might ruin our friendship."

"You needn't worry any more, Flange," said Mr. Harlow, "I've bought my guns."

"What?" cried Mr. Rordon, turning red in righteous wrath. "What have you bought, you simp?"



"I got a 30-30 for all-round field work," stated Mr. Harlow calmly, "and a .45 cordite express. I slipped out and matched your guns just after you showed them to me yesterday."

A look of mingled shame and great relief passed over Mr. Rordon's face.

"I will now pay for a drink," he said.

## VI

"FLANGE," said Mr. Harlow, in the midst of a shopping expedition, "you're so all-fired wise, perhaps you can tell me why we have been shadowed since we struck this burg."

"Shadowed!" exclaimed Mr. Rordon, and laughed. "You've got the willies!"

"There's a sniveling, weasel-like individual with a long nose," stated Mr. Harlow, "who has accompanied us for four days. You have never ordered an article, a drink, of a meal without his taking a near interest in the operation. Look over your shoulder any time you feel like proving I'm a liar, and you'll find I'm not."

Mr. Rordon complied with the suggestion, and located just such an individual as Mr. Harlow had described. The two friends left the emporium where they were at the time, and passed to another, with the measured stride of the intentionally unsuspecting. The weasel followed. They tried a further deliberate move, with a like result. Mr. Rordon's face grew abnormally grave.

"I've never had anything like this happen to me before," he said; "not in London. But for some inexplicable reason I feel the same tremors that the bravest of men know when being tracked by wounded buffalo."

"Well, I've learned something," commented Mr. Harlow. "I've learned what people mean when they say they've been buffaloed. But if I were you, Flange, I'd wait for something bigger than that peewee kike to get my nerve."

"Oh, him!" said Mr. Rordon with a shrug. "He's a worm. Let's step on him."

He whirled around and made straight for the weasel, who promptly fled within the portals of a pub. Mr. Rordon followed, accompanied by Mr. Harlow, in whose eyes was dawning a gleam of hope after heart-sickening, uneventful days. The advance on the weasel finally drove him to the farthest and shadowiest of the beer-stained deal tables of the establishment, where he sat down and signaled for a waiter. Mr.

Rordon rudely drew out the chair opposite and motioned Mr. Harlow to the remaining end seat, which, when occupied, cut off the victim's sole avenue of retreat.

"A pint of half-and-half," said the dry-lipped weasel to the waiter, in an accent that savored of the far-away Bowery as it once was.

"Make it three," said Mr. Rordon.

"Here, you!" protested the weasel.

"Here you yourself," growled Mr. Rordon, in a low but highly intimidating tone.

"Well, whadda ya want?" asked the weasel, as the waiter withdrew. "I ain't done nothin'."

"Look here, Ikey!" said Mr. Rordon, his face suddenly breaking into the most genial of smiles. "We don't want to kick you where it would hurt most. We don't want to bloody your nose, close your eyes, and shove your teeth through the cotton-field in your throat. We don't want to generally beat you up so your mother's best friend wouldn't recognize his son, and then hand you over to the nearest cop for making illicit proposals. We don't want to do any of these rude things, but—"

Here Mr. Rordon produced so portentous a frown that the already darkish room turned black before the weasel's eyes.

"We don't want to," rumbled on Mr. Rordon, "but by the imperial swordfish we will if we have to! Now tell me—who is paying you?"

"Pinkerbums," gasped the weasel, making a sound midway between a snivel and a sly whine.

"Oh, are they?" said Mr. Rordon, and measured the crafty features of his *vis-à-vis* with a penetrating glance. He drew from his pocket a handful of sovereigns, laid them on the table, and pushed one forward within easy reach of the ferret. "Come on, now," he admonished. "What's the real cognomen of the interested party? A thick un for each letter of the name!"

The sleuth looked upon the heap of gold and writhed. As the battling moth is drawn by flame to perdition, so was his weakling soul drawn to the mound of visualized wealth; but even in the throes of surrender his greedy eyes showed a gleam of calculating craft.

"M," he said, and gathered in the sovereign.

Mr. Rordon was somewhat taken aback by that first letter, but pushed the next coin forward thoughtfully.



"LOOK HERE, HELEN!" HE BEGAN. "WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? WHOSE PARTY DO YOU THINK THIS IS, ANYWAY?"

"I," said the weasel, as he pocketed it.

Frowning at this further development along unexplainable lines, Mr. Rordon advanced another coin.

"S," said the sleuth, as he annexed it.

A gleam suddenly glimmered in Mr. Rordon's eyes, but was immediately doused by an effort of will. He could not, however, hide the faint glow as of a shy dawn in his cheeks. He feared for a moment that the weasel might note it, but found that individual's eyes actually watering at the corners in their hungry gaze on the heap of

gold. He quickly maneuvered another yellow boy to the front.

"S, again," said the precious-metal glutton.

Mr. Rordon swept the remaining coins from the table into his pocket and sank deep in his chair.

"Miss Helen Pelter Hume!" he groaned.

The surprised look of a dying worm spread over the weasel's features.

"Stung!" he murmured.

"Flange," said Mr. Harlow in respectful awe, "you're wonderful! But come, brace



"I'M FOND OF THE SEA," SHE EXPLAINED, "BECAUSE YOU CAN SATISFY ALL THE HUNGER YOU'VE GOT FOR LOOKING ON WATER AND STILL KEEP DRY"

up, old man, or I'll have to call aid to get you home."

He led Mr. Rordon out into the open air and bade him look upon the buildings standing as they had stood for eons, upon men going about their affairs as usual, upon the trees calm in the full foliage of the dawn of summer, upon the twittering sparrows, and, last of all, upon God's blue sky, a small sample of which had providentially appeared in the murky heavens, as at the small end of a telescope.

"Buck up, Flange!" he murmured com-

fortingly. "It isn't as if she herself were here."

"Oh, isn't it?" said Mr. Rordon, suddenly galvanized into action, and started off at a great pace for Cockspur Street, where he passed all the shipping announcements in rapid and expert review. "Miss Hume," he finally announced, "is either at Tilbury docks or getting out of the boat-train at Fenchurch Street. The worst of it is, Charlie, we haven't a sailing for five days. We will go to the lake region. I can't imagine Miss Hume ever thinking it pos-

sible that you and I would go to the lake region."

The rest of the day was taken up with a feverish orgy of packing, at the end of which their total new and old possessions, with the exception of a full traveling-bag apiece, were duly taken over by reliable shippers for delivery on board the Gertrude Wormwoman, sailing *via* Lisbon, Mediterranean ports, and the Suez Canal for Zanzibar, Mozambique, and the Cape.

Thereafter Mr. Rordon sadly piloted Mr. Harlow into the still-life beauties of the lake region, where he discovered a quiet inn calculated to appeal almost tearfully to all the stereotyped demands of the book-fed tourist, and took rooms for two weeks.

"Two weeks!" gasped Mr. Harlow after twenty-four droning hours. "Look here, Flange!" he protested. "Why come up here and pay these Americanized prices to watch the rain? We could have hired a shower-bath somewhere in London for a mere smell of the money. What about our ship sailing in two more of these twenty-four centuries?"

"Life isn't as simple as all that," said Mr. Rordon gloomily. "Do you think I enjoy scraping mold off my hide, instead of taking a morning bath? The point is this: Miss Hume is now searching England for us. Just about the time she traces us into this inverted bucket we'll make one howling dash for a place in the sun and liberty—Folkestone to Boulogne, the transcontinental express, Brindisi, Port Said, all in one hop, skip, and a jump on to the welcoming decks of the Gertrude Wormwoman just as she nips the bud of the canal. Do you get me?"

"Sure!" said Mr. Harlow with a sigh.

He turned his attention to making a paper cage for subsequently captured houseflies. As Mr. Rordon watched him cannily tracking down one victim after another with cupped hand and stealthy stride, he felt deeply cheered, and declared that Mr. Harlow's rapidly developing game-instinct was a happy augury.

Time did not fly, but it finally passed, though on soggy wings, and on the appointed day the two friends started their rush for the Near East. Long before they arrived at Port Said their spirits had risen to such a height that they felt they could almost reach out and pat on the back the blazing sun sailing on the meridian apex of an arch of cerulean blue.

"Gee, Flange!" murmured Mr. Harlow. "Who said sunshine, eh?"

It was in such mood that they boarded the Gertrude Wormwoman just as she cast off hawsers and took her place in the line for the canal passage. Most of her crew and passengers lined the rail, but there was one exception. Miss Hume, dressed in the filmiest of dimity heart-stimulators, was stretched at length on a *chaise longue* drawn well out of the glare, sipping something with ice in it through a straw.

"Hello!" she said languidly.

Mr. Rordon did not reply. He stood stunned beneath such a blow as fate had seldom dealt him. Not so Mr. Harlow. He advanced on his cousin in sputtering wrath.

"Look here, Helen!" he began. "Where did you come from? Why aren't you searching the swamps of England, eh? Rordon said you would be, and by—and by hike, you ought to! Whose party do you think this is, anyway?"

Miss Hume looked him over calmly, and then turned her gaze on Mr. Rordon, to whom alone she spoke.

"I'm fond of the sea," she explained, "because you can satisfy all the hunger you've got for looking on water and still keep dry. It seemed silly to wade around England with nothing to do, so I came aboard at Southampton. Lisbon was lovely from a distance, the food at Marseilles was a revelation, and Naples, as you doubtless know, is forever adorable. I've been so comfy! This is a German ship, and the women go everywhere—even in the smoking-room."

At that last statement the stiffening that was left in the marrow of Mr. Rordon's bones melted into drawn butter. He sat down in the chair next to Miss Hume and studied her for a long time. He reminded himself that every division of the chase—namely, the pursuit of beast by beast, of beast by man, of man by beast or by woman—has its distinct science, its recognized finesse, and its sporting chance to the proposed victim. Where these principles did not obtain, a chase was no chase, but murder. With regard to women he had had for years an invariable rule summed up in the two words, "Beat it." Never before had it failed him.

Miss Hume was not unaware of Mr. Rordon's scrutiny, though she attempted to appear so. Having finished her drink, she sat with hands folded in her lap, her head tilted



slightly forward, and her ankles crossed so that they drew attention to her adorable feet incased in snowy buckskin, which in turn sent the eye back along a tantalizingly short reach of beautifully molded limbs clad

making of a man, background is to that of a woman. Miss Hume would be conceded a beauty anywhere, but in the ambient of Fifth Avenue, for instance, the beholding of her would not have caused, *ipso facto*, a



"DIS VOOMANS," EXPLAINED THE TAR PLACIDLY, "WANTS HER T'INGS ON DECK AT EVERY PORT, AND SHE BAY FOR IT"

in white silk. White was her note. Were it not for the rise and fall of her full bosom, and the relieving accent of her tobacco-colored eyes and hair, one might have taken her for a cool and billowy cloud suspended by some miraculous agency twelve inches above the deck.

Mr. Rordon conceived a new thought, to the effect that what atmosphere is to the

block in the traffic; much less would it have brought on appreciable atmospheric changes. Here, however, against the opalescent light of desert sands and the foil of barbaric surroundings, she attained the proportions of a cosmic event.

In the midst of a glare unequalled west of Suez she irradiated coolness. Her beauty, through being exotic to that place and time,

imposed itself as above the laws of nature, defied actinic rays, and seemed to call upon the sun, as well as all mortal men, to pause in passing. Having due regard to the hungry looks of the male passengers who, on the way to duty and exile, found themselves accompanied by an astounding vision of boudoir perfection, Mr. Rordon decided that whatever might subsequently transpire, he and Mr. Harlow must at all costs defend Miss Hume from importunate annoyance.

He told her so very gravely, and immediately fled before the full glance of her eyes with which he was rewarded. Drawing Mr. Harlow into the privacy of the large stateroom which they were to share, he outlined the case as he saw it, and concluded with these cryptic words:

"Charlie, this boat stops and keeps on stopping at every tin shack along the east coast of Africa. What I want you to remember, whenever you hear the hooter hoot for a bar, is that there's no law against our abandoning the ship at a moment's notice—a thing not easy to do unless you've made preparations."

"I get you," said Mr. Harlow. "It doesn't matter much where we get off on the edge of the Dark Continent, so long as we get off when a certain party is not counting on moving-day."

"You have gathered my meaning," said Mr. Rordon, but his brow was not altogether clear of trouble.

He had not recovered from the shock of finding Miss Hume's intelligence well above par in the matter of getting away from England on more than an even break.

His fears were justified, full measure and overflowing, when the Gertrude Worm-woman made an insignificant stop of two hours at Suez. Mr. Rordon, languidly pacing the deck, was suddenly electrified by seeing what appeared to be his entire kit piled in the waist of the ship. He slid down the companionway by the hand-rails, rather than take time to walk down the steps, and fell upon the polyglot quartermaster in charge of passengers' cargo.

"Here, what are you doing?" he demanded, and then paused.

His eye had fallen on the oft-stenciled name "Miss Hume" which decorated the cases.

"Dis voomans," explained the tar placidly, "wants her t'ings on deck at every port, and she bay for it."

Had the speaker deigned to look up

promptly, he would have seen a pallor spread over the face of the interlocutor which would have aroused the most apathetic curiosity; but being slow about the transfer of his milky-blue eyes, once they had settled on any given object, all he saw was Mr. Rordon's retreating back as that gentleman proceeded to the upper deck and Miss Hume's side.

"Just been looking over your cases," he said, as casually as he could manage. "They looked so like ours that it gave me a start to see them ready for the shore. Are you leaving?"

"Not unless you are," said Miss Hume with a radiant smile. "There's no mystery about my things," she added thoughtfully. "I just duplicated every last purchase you and Charlie made while you were in London. You see, I thought you'd know best what will be needed."

Mr. Rordon would have liked to congratulate her heartily on her canny perspicacity, but something was the matter with his throat. He could only gulp. He arose, lit a cigarette, and withdrew from her vicinity to the cabin, whence he sent out a call for Mr. Harlow, and, suddenly finding the floods of speech released, unburdened his overfull heart.

"Cheer up, Flange!" said his confidant. "You'll find a way. Trust yourself for that. I've got to get back on deck. Helen and I have challenged that fat couple to shuffleboard for a cold bottle. So-long!"

Mr. Harlow had assumed to himself by far the larger share of the labor of keeping Miss Hume out of the hands of promiscuous woman-eaters. As a consequence, Mr. Rordon had unlimited opportunity to brood over the future and possible chances of delivery. By the time the voyage had dragged on for a month past Somaliland, British and German East, Zanzibar, Mozambique, and half of Portuguese East, he had formulated a cruel but desperate plan.

"Charlie," he said one night, "we get off at Beira to-morrow."

"Right, old horse!" said Mr. Harlow promptly. "This old tub has been palling on me for some time, viewed as an adventure-incubator. What's the idea?"

"It's mean, but it's necessary," said Mr. Rordon. "Beira is my private stamping-ground. I hold outfitters, train-despatchers, custom-house officials, and the general *hoi polloi* in the hollow of my heart. If I tell them I'm in trouble, they'll stalemate any

pursuer, male, female, or intermediate, until the cows come home."

"I see!" said Mr. Harlow, after a thoughtful pause. "Your scheme sounds well, Flange, but there's just one weak link in it. In connection with that weak link I want you to make me a hidebound promise and keep it."

"What is it?" said Mr. Rordon. "Where's the weak link?"

"In yourself," said Mr. Harlow impressively. "And this is the oath I want you to take. If Helen *cries*, promise me you'll run. Do you promise?"

(To be continued in the July number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

"I do," said Mr. Rordon.

That night he sought out Miss Hume and asked her to walk.

"Has Charlie told you?" he questioned. "We're getting off to-morrow at Biera."

"Oh, *are* we?" exclaimed Miss Hume, giving his words their extreme collective interpretation. "I'm so glad, and—and so grateful to you for telling me!"

He left her almost abruptly, and on his way to bed talked to himself aloud for the first time in an eventful life.

"Do they go you one better?" he asked, and promptly answered himself: "Always!"

## Safety First

BY HERMAN HOWARD MATTESON

Illustrated by F. McAnelly

SERGEANT RASS BITNER, officer in command of the water-front precinct and station, sat behind his flat-topped desk. The door leading into the front office was closed and the bolt shot into place. The sergeant wanted to be alone. He wanted to think. He *had* to think.

In his pudgy hand he had a roll of bills. He counted them again and again. Two hundred dollars! Rass Bitner knew perfectly well that there were two hundred dollars in the roll, but he wanted to think, had to think, and the operation of fingering the money seemed to inspire and stimulate cerebration.

The possession of the two hundred brought no joy, apparently, to his policeman's heart. His little round head had settled itself snugly down into his number seventeen-and-a-half collar. The sergeant had no neck to speak of.

Sergeant Bitner was worried. He had just answered a phone call from headquarters. The chief himself had been on the other end of the line. The talk over the phone had been about a roll containing four hundred dollars. Four hundred dollars had been taken at the point of a bulldog gun from a tugboat captain named Hoy Weston. With profane and acerbic language, the chief had informed Rass Bitner

that unless the stick-up artist was apprehended and the four hundred dollars returned to the seafaring person named Weston, why, Sergeant Rass Bitner was due to hear, and feel, something drop.

Whereat the heart of Bitner grew troubled. The identical two-hundred-dollar roll that he was worrying between his pudgy fingers was an exact, mathematical half of the four hundred whereof the seafaring person had been robbed.

His superior's sharp mandate had given Sergeant Bitner an unpleasant start; but Bitner was an old hand at the game. For a few moments the chief's words fretted his soul, but only for a few moments. Then, like the sea after a passing gust, he became serene, composed, confident.

Bitner rose, shot back the bolt, opened the door. In the outer office three plainclothes men and a harness bull were playing checkers with a stool-pigeon named Callie Ream.

The sergeant opened the front door, descended the steps, and made his way up the street, his small, piglike eyes squinting. Sergeant Rass Bitner was thinking. He always had been a thinker, which explains why he was a sergeant and not a harness bull, why he owned real estate, a bank balance, mortgages, and notes of hand.

Sergeant Bitner knew his chief. When the chief tossed his head and began baying the moon, police folk of Barnacle City took to the tall uncut. The sergeant had been frightened only for a few minutes, but he knew just the same that it was up to him to get busy. The restoration of the whole four hundred was out of the question. It had been split several ways, the largest portion coming Bitner's way. Every jitney had long since been squandered, save the two hundred in the hands of the careful Mr. Bitner.

back and arm-rest of one of the benches, sound asleep.

Sergeant Bitner took a soft step forward and peered into the sleeper's face.

## II

As the boss of the water-front precinct moved off in the direction of the station he



AS THE BOSS OF THE WATER-FRONT PRECINCT MOVED OFF IN THE DIRECTION OF THE STATION HE CHUCKLED SOFTLY TO HIMSELF. LUCK! A GREAT CHUNK OF LUCK!

Still thinking, Bitner walked on slowly. If a proven thief could be dragged forward, and say a hundred or so of the plunder restored, why, that would suffice—would not only suffice but gain Bitner praise from the chief, and perhaps a lieutenancy.

About three squares from the precinct police-station a little park nestled in a triangle formed by two intersecting streets. Through this park Bitner walked slowly, his cunning little eyes no longer upon the earth, but scanning and appraising shrewdly the occupants of the various benches.

He came to a sudden pause, puckered the corner of his mouth, and, without turning his head, expectorated copiously. A long, lanky, youngish man, dressed in what was obviously a new suit, was draped over the

chuckled softly to himself. Luck! A great chunk of luck! Luck always favored a man with nerve and get-up, and Bitner had always had plenty of both. The sergeant always claimed that the best verse in the Bible was "faint heart never won fair lady."

Reentering his private office, Bitner closed and latched the door, and walked to the "mug file." Tacked to a number of hinged frames were the photographs of yeggs, dips, two-story men, pete men—members all, in police parlance, of the Johnson family.

Turning the files swiftly, Bitner finally found what he sought. The third photograph from the left showed a countenance not in the least vicious or abandoned. In-



deed, the face was an attractive one, though homely as sin, with a humorous twist about the mouth—the face of the identical person in the new suit who was draped over the park bench asleep.

Sergeant Rass Bitner chuckled again, slipped back the bolt in the door, took his seat at the desk, and touched a button. The blotter clerk appeared in the doorway.

"Tell Tom I want to see him."

Promptly Tom Downey, plain-clothes man, entered the office and closed the door behind him.

"You recollect that ten-spot I shoves you here a day or so back, Tom?"

Tom nodded his head slowly. He recalled the incident. He had spent the ten. A demand for a blow-back would have proved embarrassing in the extreme.

"Well, Tom, the party in whose bank-roll that ten-spot was a pewholder, has pulled out his snort stop. He's roared. The chief's teeterin' on his hind legs this morning, and says we gotta bring a lamb to the block for that job, or he's goin' to drop a depth-bomb in this precink. Get that?"

Tom began to look interested, also relieved. There had been no call thus far for a return of the ten. If the job weren't going to be too tough, he was willing to work out the ten and help the sergeant. So he said questioningly:

"Well?"

"They's a long, lanky party beatin' room-rent on one of the park benches," replied Bitner. "He's wearin' a new suit. Take a pipe at number three, left, there in the fambly album, Tom."

Tom Downey stepped to the mug gallery and studied the photo. Detective Downey smiled and nodded his head. Perfectly he recalled the horselike countenance and lanky figure of party number three, left.

"That same bird is right this minute asleep out there in the park, Tom. Y'understand?"

Thoroughly Tom understood. A look of rare intelligence overspread his face, reaching as far as the top of his flap-pointed collar.

Sergeant Bitner, with a sigh, pulled the roll of currency from his pocket and slowly, reluctantly, counted out seventy-five dollars. He looked at the bundle, peeled off twenty-five dollars, and returned it to the roll, which he thrust back into his pocket. Fifty dollars was enough for a plant; no use being foolish.

Then he reached into a drawer and produced a double-action bulldog revolver of ancient pattern. Bitner shoved the money and the gun toward Detective Downey, who grinned, picked them up, put them into a pocket, and departed.

Again Sergeant Bitner pressed his desk bell. Promptly the blotter clerk presented himself to receive his superior's orders.

"Dannie," said the sergeant, his brusque, authoritative office manner having been almost completely restored, "tell Joe Rogers to caper down the street to Mann's and fetch Divvy here, quick!"

Within ten minutes Detective Joe Rogers opened the door of the sergeant's office and thrust through the portal a rat-faced young man who wore mauve-colored, cloth-top shoes. He closed the door and returned to his game of checkers.

Like a trapped rodent hunting the remotest corner of his cage, Divvy backed away as far as the confines of the room would permit and braced his narrow back against the wall.

"Divvy," said the sergeant severely, gloating in the manifest fear that his presence inspired in the sunken breast of the cringing dip and stick-up artist, "you recollect that four hundred bucks you jips off'n a seafarin' party here in the wharfshed a few days back? Oh, yes, you do! You sticks him up with a gat and takes his poke off'n him. You remember all right, Divvy! Well, I—"

"But, chief—" expostulated the wretched Divvy. In his dealings with the police, Divvy always addressed the minion of the law as "chief." It often seemed to help a little.

"Shut up! I say you recollect the episode. Well, they's a roar. You just naturally got to beat it out of town, Divvy. Head for Oshkosh or Terry Hut, and don't you come back here till the twittering birdies nest again. Get that, Divvy?"

"But, chief—"

"Shut up! And you ramble sudden, Divvy. Get that—sudden?"

"But, chief—"

Divvy came forward boldly to the sergeant's desk, drowning the latter's repeated "Shut up!" with shrill and quaking expostulations.

"But, chief, I give up three hundred bucks out of that four hundred head of kale. You know who to. I had some bills to pay. I'm broke. I can't jump out on

just 'God bless you, darling.' I had some bills to pay. I—"

"Oh, I'm wise, I'm wise!" snorted the sergeant. "You buys a thimble of snow"—cocain—"and another thimble, and you takes a sleigh-ride. Look how them hands of yourn tremble! Your mug is like a fish belly. Here!"

The sergeant handed Divvy a twenty-dollar bill.

"Now beat it. For looks, you'd better ride the plush about five dollars' worth. Then my advice is to mope the leathers. The exercise 'll do you good, and the twenty 'll last longer. Now you figure you've kissed us all good-by, Divvy. Into the high!"

The sergeant waved an imperious hand toward the door. Divvy slid from the room, out through the front door, and faded.

### III

HAVING somewhat the expression of a man who, walking the crowded street, turns to discover that he has got some other man's wife or mother by the arm, Detective Tom Downey entered the sergeant's office. Tom fixed his gaze upon a spot on the wall, while he dug into a hip pocket and produced an ancient bulldog gun and a roll containing fifty dollars. He laid the gun and the money on the desk and turned back to the door. There he paused. Whatever had happened amiss had rendered the plain-clothes man speechless. He waved his hand, traffic-cop style, while his lips opened and closed dryly, like the fluttering gills of a dying fish.

Whatever Tom Downey had intended to say remained unsaid. With a final hand-wave and another gill-flutter, he closed the door after him.

Sergeant Rass Bitner sat staring down hard at the gun and the money. Tom had zammed the job! Unframed, the long, lanky person no doubt slept peacefully on. Tom had zammed the job! A man of much subtle practise in the gentle art of framing, Tom Downey did not often zam a job.

Swallowing hard, Bitner touched the gun with his pudgy fingers and fondled the roll of bills. Real gun, all right, and real money!

"Whatinell!" exploded the sergeant, as he pressed the call-bell.

Joe Rogers entered in response to his superior's waved command.

"Joe, is Tom drinkin'?"

Joe shook his head.

"Has Tom got fambly trouble? Anybody died? Is he sick? Got religion?"

To all these questions Joe continued to shake his head negatively. Far as he knew, Tom was all right.

The sergeant pointed to the bulldog gun and the wad of bills.

"You recollect them ten bucks I shoved you here a day or so back, Joe?"

Joe looked apprehensive. He also had expended his ten dollars of easy money. Yes, he remembered that a little jing of cash had come his way.

Gulping hard, stabbing his thick finger at the gun and the money, the sergeant proceeded to elucidate.

"Well, the seafarin' party that Divvy jipped that four hundred off'n has roared. The chief says they's got to be a blow-back, and the stick-up that done the job has got to get grabbed and crucified. Now Divvy hain't here; he's on his way to Salt Lake. The four hundred's spent. Divvy's been indulgin' free in dope. So we got to look our hand over good, Joe. Take a pipe at number three, left, Joe!"

The sergeant pointed to the rogues' gallery. Joe stepped over and studied the benign, homely countenance of number three, left. Joe grinned and nodded. He remembered perfectly the "phiz" of number three, left.

"Well, Joe, we just gotta drag a lamb to the altar. That number three party is asleep, if Tom didn't give him his dinner call when he zammed this job, right here in the park. We gotta get that gun onto this party, and that roll into his clothes. Get that? Then let Ben Steen or some of the boys get a high sign and pick him up. That clear, Joe? Now, don't you zam out on this. Whatinell d'you suppose is the matter with Tom?"

Joe Rogers zam on a job, a simple pick-up like this? With a cocky toss of his head, Joe picked up the gun and the wad of bills. It didn't matter what had been the matter with Tom Downey; there was nothing the matter with Joe Rogers. That bird roosting on the park bench was just as good as on his way, the jewelry snapped about his wrists.

### IV

HALF an hour later, the harness bull on duty on the station beat knocked upon the sergeant's door, advanced, saluted respect-

fully, and laid upon the desk an old-fashioned bulldog revolver and fifty dollars in bills.

Sergeant Rass Bitner's jaw jarred open and hung wabbling.

"I—you—he—whatinell!"



BITNER SHOVED THE MONEY AND THE GUN TOWARD DETECTIVE DOWNEY, WHO GRINNED, PICKED THEM UP, PUT THEM INTO A POCKET, AND DEPARTED

"I'm walking my beat," explained the harness bull. "Joe Rogers comes tearing out of the park like he'd had a speed pill. As he lopes by he slips me this gat and these leaves of lettuce, and he mutters kind of crazy like for me to give 'em to you. Talking kind of loony, Joe says he's got to see a oculist and a nerve specialist, and then take a good long rest in a sanatorium. With that he lams onto a car and beats it."

Sergeant Rass Bitner swallowed hard a time or two.

"All r-r-right," he stuttered. "You kin go now."

The moment the harness bull had closed the door behind him, Sergeant Bitner rose and walked three times around his office chair. When luck ran tough, that three times around the chair frequently turned

the tide. It could, at least, do no harm in the present distressing situation.

Then, having worked his gambler's supplication to the deity of chance, Bitner seated himself. With a trancelike expression in his little eyes, he absently fingered the gun and the wad of money. Then he pressed the bell.

"I wanta see Skid."

At once Lafe Skidmore, plain-clothes man, appeared. Not only was "Skid" a

natural abbreviation of his surname, but it was an appellation that fitted him to a T. No man on the force was more adept than he when it came to greasing the skids for a "fall guy."

"You recollect them ten bucks I slips you a day or so back, Skid?"

It was difficult for Skid to recall so negligible a sum, but he did remember vaguely that a pinch of cigar-money had come his way.

"Well, Skid, they's a roar—headquarters. Divvy is on his way to Tucson, Arizona. The chief says we gotta bring a veal to the block, and recover back that four hundred bucks for the sailor that got jipped. Get that, Skid? Well, you're in, even if you didn't nick the roll for but a ten-spot. Get that? You do? You'd better!"

The sergeant twisted in his swivel chair and pointed to the mug rack.

"Number three there, Skid, left."

Skid remembered number three, left, and grinned as he recalled some vastly humorous circumstance in connection with the homely young man.

"Well," said the sergeant, "that number three bird, right this minute, is in the arms of Orpheum. Maybe you don't get that; it's poetry. I mean that bird's asleep in the park, on a bench. See that old cannon there, and that wad of dough? We gotta frame this sleeping hoozus in the park. Somebody has got to get grabbed for this sailor job, and it might as well be him."

"Soft!" exclaimed Mr. Skidmore in tones of disdain, as he pocketed the gun and the money. "Soft! That bird is just as good as in the wagon and on his way. Soft!"

Half an hour elapsed; an hour. No signs of Mr. Skidmore. Sergeant Rass Bitner paced the floor, chewed tobacco savagely, and exclaimed half aloud forty times:

"Whatinell!"

At last Bitner could withstand the suspense no longer. He clapped on his gold-braided cap. Swiftly he walked down the street in the direction of the park.

A single look sufficed. The tall, angular person, wearing a new suit, still lay draped across the back of the park bench, asleep.

Back to the station went Bitner, to take a fresh chew and another walk about the floor. Another half-hour went by, and no signs of Mr. Skidmore.

Bitner thrust his head from the office door and called sharply to Callie Ream, the stool-pigeon, who still sat playing checkers with Ben Steen, a harness bull who was soon to go on relief.

"Callie," said the sergeant, "you prance out and lamp around and see if you can find Lafe Skidmore. When you find him, you tell him to report back here quick, like he knowed we was gashin' up a piece of soft money. Hurry!"

Breathing hard as evidence of the haste with which he had gone about the business entrusted to him, Callie Ream returned.

"I found him. Skid can't come. He can't walk. He can't talk, neither. I found him in Danner's saloon, h'istin' 'em with two hands. He'd been cryin'. I seen the tear-streaks on his face. His chin was still quiverin'. All he could do was kind of

gurgle, and point for me to take something out of his pocket. Here it is."

The stool-pigeon laid upon the desk an old-fashioned bulldog gun and fifty dollars in currency.

"Yow! Yow! Yow!"

Sergeant Rass Bitner settled his clawing fingers into his own hair, lifted himself from the office chair, and went leaping and yowling about the room like a rabid dog.

"Yow! Yow! Whatinell! Get out o' here! Beat it!"

And the stool-pigeon beat it, slamming the door after him.

Immediately Sergeant Bitner tore the door open again, emitted a yell that shot Ben Steen, the harness bull, out of his chair like a jack-in-a-box.

"Ben, you come here. Come on!"

The sergeant gave an enginelike puff between words, betraying thereby the extreme profundity of the emotion that possessed him.

"Ben—they's a bird—settin' on the end bench—in the park. He's a long—gangling party. In a gray—suit. He's asleep—or was. If he hain't asleep—when you get there—put him to sleep. And get these—into his clothes. You understand—*get-these-into-his-clothes!* He's just got to be framed. Get that, Ben?—framed. Now, beat it quick!"

Officer Steen glared about wildly, seized the gun and the money and tore for the front door; only to return within less than fifteen minutes.

As he entered the sergeant's private office, Officer Steen was unpinning the star from the breast of his uniform coat. He reached into a hip-pocket, pulled out his leather-covered "sap," and placed it upon the desk. He reached into the armhole of his vest on the left side and brought forth a pair of shiny handcuffs. Beside the sap and the handcuffs and the star he laid his gun and his night-stick. In addition to the exhibits named, he placed upon the polished mahogany an old bulldog gun and fifty dollars in money.

Officer Steen then threw his hands heavenward, worked his neck in his collar where it was tight, and walked out without a word. Officer Steen had turned in his tools. Officer Steen had resigned.

## V

HANDS hanging limply at the sides of the chair, legs extended, toes pointing ceiling-



ward, Sergeant Rass Bitner sat huddled, staring stupidly at the stuff on the top of his desk.

And thus for a long time he sat and stared, while the telephone rang and rang. The blotter clerk answered, as the phones in the inner and outer offices were linked in circuit.

"It's the chief, sergeant. I thought you must be out, so I answered. The chief says this sailor, Hoy Weston, grabbed Divvy just as Divvy was climbing a train for somewheres. It hain't no good news, sergeant. The chief says he's gave Divvy the third, first

in the park gimme a dime to fetch it. Here it is!"

The newsy laid a crumpled bit of paper on the desk and departed.

It was some time before Sergeant Bitner



taking away his thimble of snow. Divvy broke down and coughed. The chief wants you, sergeant, at once, at headquarters."

Still the sergeant stared at the collection on top of the desk. Presently a shrewd-faced boy, who sold newspapers on the corner below, entered the outer office and asked to see the sergeant.

"I got a note for you, sarge. A hoozus

could coordinate his faculties sufficiently to reach, open, and read the note:

DERE SARGUN BITNER:

You remember how two years ago, when I come from the banks for a outing, you framed me and sent me to the pen for a year. Safety first, sarge. This year I takes no chances. Before arriving down at your city, I goes to Middleton and I gets the tailor to build me a new suit of clothes without no pockets. Good-by, sarge.

### THE ISTHMUS

POPPIES surround the shifting scene  
Of mingled shadow and of light,  
Where sleep—an isthmus—lies between  
The continents of day and night.

William Hamilton Hayne

# Under the Spell

BY ROBERT SHANNON

Illustrated by Anton Otto Fischer

IN front of the Mansion House, Bernardo the Great—mind-reader, hypnotist, and magician—gazed at his four trunks on the sidewalk with a dispirited eye, in which there was not the slightest gleam of hypnotic power.

His six feet of pompous figure—stately in Prince Albert coat, white vest, black tie, gray trousers, and wide-brimmed soft felt hat—might well impress others with an air of wealth and well-being, but the sad fact was that Bernardo was broke.

This season the eminent hypnotist's luck had been the worst in twenty years. An unfortunate poker game with a farmer who proved to be a frame-up, influenza, the defection of his beautiful mind-reading assistant to marry an auto liveryman, the sudden resignation of his hypnotic "plant" to accept a sure-pay job as a plumber's assistant, the burning of the Hillville opera-house just before Bernardo was to give the one-man performance that might have saved him—well, there was comfort in the fact that his luck could scarcely get worse.

Bernardo meditated deeply. His lids closed over his magnetic eyes as he racked his brain for an answer to the problem of his empty pocketbook. Finally he moved toward the desk, where the hotel proprietor was casting up his accounts.

"Which is the biggest bank in this city, and where is it located?" he inquired.

His host blinked.

"There ain't only one bank in Hillville," he said, "and it ain't so dern big. It's right down to the corner there." He jerked his thumb in a general westward direction.

"I thank you, my good sir."

The discussion was closed. Any one would have guessed Bernardo was going to deposit a large sum in the bank. He moved with dignity to the sidewalk and strolled leisurely down the block.

A small boy spinning a top indicated that spring was at hand. The genial warmth of the sun and the fragrance of budding trees confirmed it.

"Boy," said Bernardo the Great to a young and very black negro who was scrubbing the sidewalk in front of the bank, "why ain't that institution open? It's nine o'clock."

A flash of white teeth accompanied the negro's amiable, grinning reply.

"It's city banks what keep dem nine-o'clock hours. Dis is a country bank, boss. It's a ten-o'clock bank."

The black breast expanded. It was a business conversation with a white man. Something about the big stranger was familiar.

"Scuse me, sah—ain't I saw you befo'? In de museum down on Mahket Street in St. Louis?" The grin broadened with recognition. "De hypnotical man—right next to the lady wid de snakes? 'Long 'bout foh yeahs ago?" He paused expectantly. "On Mahket Street, sah?"

"Yes, I was there," Bernardo admitted.

"Sho'ly, sho'ly! Does you still pull dem white rabbits out'n a plug hat?"

The hypnotist waved the question aside.

"I'll come back in an hour," he said.

"Course de bank ain't open yet, but Mistah Rockbone, de president, he's down heah early dis mawnin'. I done neglect to tell you dat."

"Boy, what's your name?" Bernardo asked, with a sudden inspiration.

"Jefferson Davis Spriggins, sah."

"Listen, Jeff"—the tone was confidential—"I'm going to give you a dollar this morning for doing exactly what I tell you to. Don't ask any questions. I'm going in to see Mr. Rockbone, and pretty soon I'll call you in. You just act like you were hypnotized—just act that way."

The idea appealed.

"Yes, sah; I knows. Suah, I kin ack! For a dollah, yes, sah!" A merry twinkle was in the black's eyes.

"Maybe I'll make it two if you do it well," Bernardo added. "Now stick around here where I can keep my eye on you."

"Yes, sah, sho'ly."

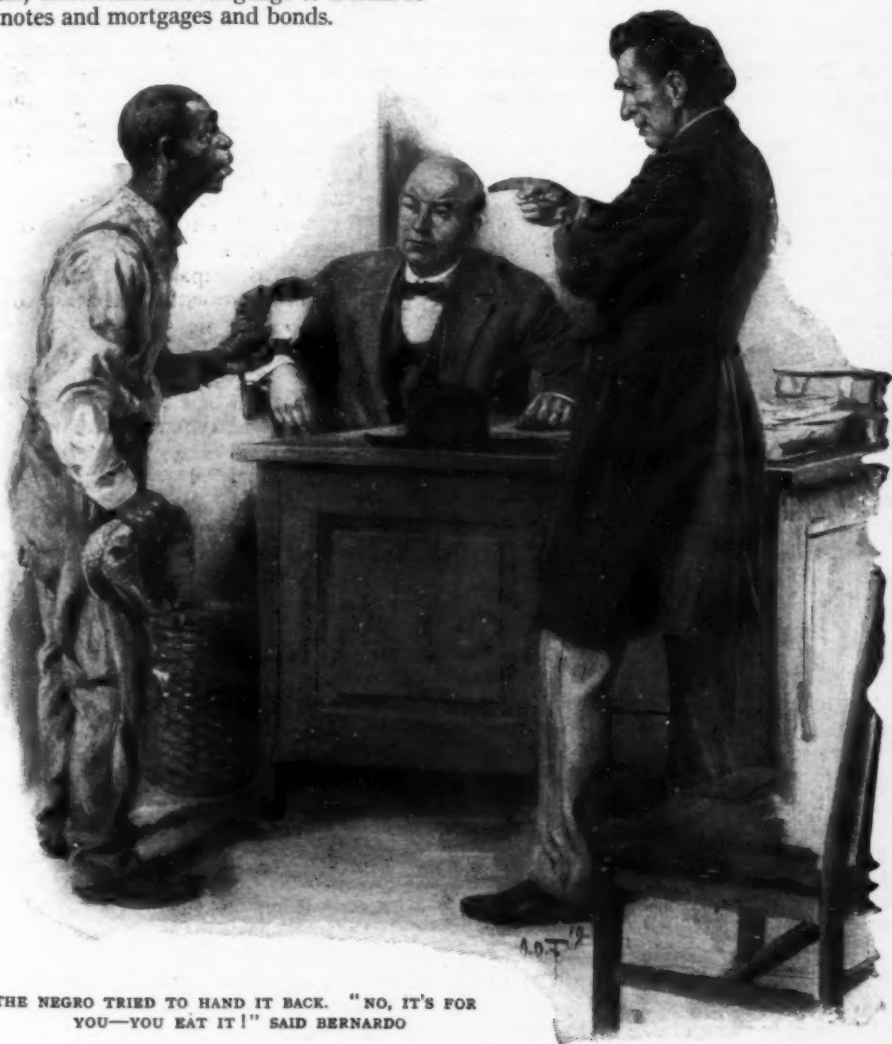
The bargain sealed, the visitor in Hillville entered the bank and the presence of Mr. Henry Rockbone, the president.

Surrounding men who think too much of money there is an atmosphere of hardness and cupidity that cannot be concealed by a pleasant smile or gracious words. Mr. Rockbone had it. His smooth white hands, his slick bald head, his beady eyes, spoke in plain, understandable language to Bernardo of notes and mortgages and bonds.

As a boy, the banker had been ambitious to be the richest man in Tyler County, and now that his wish had been fulfilled he cast covetous eyes on Polk County on the east and Greenway County on the west. Some day, he told himself, he would be the richest man in northern Arkansas.

His smooth face broke into a cultivated smile as Bernardo came in. He rose from his desk behind the rail and advanced with his hand outstretched. Bernardo, despite his poverty, looked like money.

Each identified himself to the other, and Bernardo seated himself in the confidential chair, close to Mr. Rockbone's desk.



THE NEGRO TRIED TO HAND IT BACK. "NO, IT'S FOR YOU—YOU EAT IT!" SAID BERNARDO

"The situation is this," he commenced. "My business brings large profits—quick profits. In one week in Carthage, Missouri, I took in a gross of eight hundred dollars, and my expenses for the week were less than two hundred."

He paused to let it sink in. The banker began to harden, to compress his lips a bit tighter.

"I'm a business man. You're a business man. Temporarily I find myself a bit short of ready capital. My money"—he spoke of it casually—"is tied up in securities. Had not the opera-house here burned down last night, I would have had a splendid week. Next week I am booked at Altoona. This week I am idle—by force of circumstances. Now, I want this bank to advance me one hundred dollars, so I can run in to Little Rock, effect a slight reorganization of my company, and fill the date in Altoona."

Mr. Rockbone began to radiate financial disappointment. He gazed out of the window with a far-away look.

"I'm afraid—" He cleared his throat, and Bernardo took advantage of the moment to resume.

"My proposition is simple. You advance the money, and I'll give you complete charge of the receipts in Altoona. The first two hundred dollars that comes in is yours—a profit of one hundred per cent in one week. Furthermore, I'll pay the expenses of any one you select to take charge of the money as it comes in—hotel bill and railroad fare both ways. Your profit will be absolutely net."

The banker smiled and shook his head coldly.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Bernardo, but it isn't in our line. We are conservative bankers, and while your proposition seems fair enough, I'm sure it would not meet with the approval of our directors. We have no assurance that your entertainment—"

Bernardo the Great interrupted him with uplifted hand and a glance from his luminous eyes.

"This is sure fire! In every town I positively astound them. Just a minute—let me show you."

He stepped to the door and called upon Jefferson Davis Spriggins to enter.

"I'll show you something with this boy, Mr. Rockbone, that will prove to you that I am a safe business bet."

The banker was puzzled and slightly cu-

rious, although he tried to conceal it with a yawn.

"I'm afraid, Mr. Bernardo—" he began.

"Just five minutes of your time, if you please!"

The hypnotist was polite, but firm. As if to remind him that time was precious, Rockbone slipped his watch from his pocket, glanced at it, and closed the case with a smart click.

## II

THE ambling figure of Jeff came through the door. His lips opened as if to ask a question, but Bernardo pierced him with a glare so intense that the negro halted and stood motionless. When Jeff told the hypnotist that he could act, he had told the truth. His eyelids fluttered and his lips moved, but he made no sound.

"What is your name?"

Bernardo's voice was sharp, his eyes compelling. The reply was a quaver:

"Henry Ghostman, sah."

"Nonsense!" The banker was surprised and provoked. "His name is Jeff Spriggins. I've known him three years."

The negro turned his dull and stupid gaze to his employer and back again to the hypnotist.

"The boy is under a hypnotic spell," Bernardo explained. "Unconsciously he speaks the truth."

There was a bothered frown on Rockbone's brow.

"I don't see how you could have done it so quickly," he said, mystified.

Bernardo the Great smiled patronizingly.

"My ability to gain power over a subject, suddenly and completely, is what puzzles the press, pulpit, and public," he said quietly. "It puzzles them so much that they come in droves, at a dollar a head, to witness these strange things. I'll show you how remarkable my control is."

His eye roved about the bank. There was a blotter on the desk. Bernardo picked it up and tore off a piece as large, perhaps, as the palm of his hand.

"Here, Jeff," he said kindly, "is a nice piece of buttered toast, brown and crisp—simply oozing with melted country butter. How does it look to you?"

Jeff's face showed a faint, hungry grin. He licked his lips, and shifted his weight from one leg to the other.

"Better be careful dat butter don't drip off on yoah clothin', sah," he said.



Bernardo winked solemnly at the banker.  
 "Jeff, I'm going to give you this piece of toast."

He extended the unappetizing piece of blotter. The negro took it gingerly, examined it approvingly, and tried to hand it back, with an air of reluctance.

"No, it's for you—you eat it!"

Bernardo glowed with the suggestion. Jeff's soft, round eyes appealed in vain. To the banker it was a dumb stare, but Bernardo knew that his subject was pleading.

Rockbone rose from his chair and drew close.

"Jeff, what do you think that is in your hand?" he demanded.

"Hot toast, sah."

"Let's see you eat it, then!"

Jeff gave a last imploring glance at Bernardo, who received it with an implacable frown. Slowly the white teeth bit into the soggy blotter. The black jaws munched, and there was a visible gulp in Jeff's throat.

"Holy smoke!" Rockbone cried. "He actually ate it!"

"Certainly," said Bernardo easily.

Rockbone had resumed his seat.

"Just how far does your control extend with this boy?" he asked. "I mean, is he absolutely at your command, without reservation?"

Bernardo assented with a nod.

"He has no mind or will of his own at this moment. He will act according to any suggestion I give him. I'll show you."

He extracted the lone dollar bill from his wallet.

"You're a good boy, Jeff. I am going to present you with this twenty-dollar bill."

He showed it to the banker and passed it on to the negro.

"Twenty dollahs—for me?"

Jeff's tone indicated blank astonishment.

"Yes; it's a present."

Jeff took the bill and examined it with reverence.

"One of dem yaller-back gol' certifikicks! Dog-gone! Twenty dollahs!"

He folded it with great care and slid it away into the depth of a trouser-pocket.

A small bunch of posies in a glass on the desk caught the hypnotist's eye.

"I'll just give him another stunt before I wake him," he said, as he lifted the flowers out of the water.

"Here's a nice bunch of lettuce salad for you, Jeff. You like lettuce, don't you?"

Jeff shook his head in polite refusal.

"Kain't eat it widout salt," he explained.

"That's all right," said Bernardo. "Here's your salt." He offered a glass paper-weight from the desk.

Slowly, and with great care, Jeff went through the motions of seasoning his salad. Then, with a look of resignation tinged with suffering, he began to chew the mess.

Bernardo snapped the fingers of both hands with sudden sharpness, his hands in rapid passes before the negro's eyes.

"Wake up, Jeff!" he cried abruptly. Jeff stopped his mastication in bewilderment. "He's normal now. Ask him any question you wish."

"Why do you go by the name of Jeff Spriggins, when your real name is Ghostman?" the banker inquired.

"Did I tell my real name?" Jeff spoke as a man still dazed, but recovering rapidly. "I don't know, sah. I's feelin' confused. My name—I jes' calls myself Spriggins. Dat's de trufe."

His embarrassment was evident. A violet drooped pathetically from the corner of his mouth.

"Get out!" said the banker.

Jeff got quickly, and a moment later he was spitting mangled blossoms into an ash-can around the corner.

### III

BERNARDO dropped into the chair beside Rockbone.

"What do you think of it?" he asked.

The habit of caution was strong in the banker. He paused before he replied, drumming his desk with his fingers.

"I never saw anything like it before," he conceded. "I've heard of hypnotism, of course, but I never witnessed a demonstration before."

"Then"—Bernardo paused impressively—"am I not a safe bet for a loan of a hundred? You have seen for yourself that I can deliver the goods."

"The possibilities of hypnotism, I should think, are practically without limit," Rockbone said thoughtfully, ignoring the direct question. "Tell me, can you always control people so easily, with so little obvious effort?"

Bernardo's smile was frank and honest.

"I cannot," he said. "With a man like you—very seldom; but with an unsophisticated man or woman I never fail. There are plenty of subjects in every town."

"But why not in a legitimate business deal? It would make you a great deal of money—"

Bernardo leaned back and shook his head in deprecation.

"I have never left my own line," he said. "I am a showman. That's a legitimate business, although it may not strike a man of your temperament as such."

The banker drummed his desk with his fingers for a moment.

"I am not going to lend you that hundred," he said, "but I am going to give you a chance to earn fifty. There is a farm out south of town that is for sale. I want to buy it—for a client. I want to pay one thousand dollars for it. The owner is a woman. I cannot deal with her directly, because—because I think she harbors some resentment against me on account of a little difference I had once with her husband when he was alive. Do you think that you, acting for me, could drive out to her place and buy it—for a thousand dollars?"

He did not meet Bernardo's gaze.

"What is it really worth?"

"I really couldn't say. I may be offering too much. The place probably is run down. There are only forty acres, and it's poor land. However, I want it, as I said—for a client."

"Meaning yourself?"

"If you get me the deed, I will make you a present of fifty dollars," the banker said, ignoring the question.

There was a period of silence.

"I think she will make the deal if you show her the ready money," Rockbone said finally. "I will have the deed made out. We have the legal description of the property here in the bank. My name will appear on it, but she need not know anything about that until it is signed. I will hand you one thousand dollars in cash—"

There was more than fifty dollars in Bernardo's mind. He was thinking of a thousand—ah! A thousand in folded bills! Why, with that much money—

"You realize, of course, Mr. Rockbone, that I could go South with your thousand dollars? It would be a simple breach of trust. Do I look honest to you—or what?"

"No, you don't," said the banker frankly.

Bernardo was not offended. Many years of vagabondia had taught him how his profession was considered by most persons.

He relighted his cigar with exaggerated suavity.

"Our codes vary, I suppose," he remarked. "It may interest you to know that in the professional crowd that knows me I am considered a shining light of integrity. Maybe it is because I always keep my word. Your reputation, I presume, is equally good. I don't blame you for not trusting me, though, if you'll pardon me, your proposition seems a bit ratty. I wouldn't cop your thousand, but I don't expect you to believe that."

Rockbone smiled coldly.

"It wasn't my plan to trust you with the money," he said.

"Thank Heaven for that! It always wears me out to wrestle with temptation, and I could use the thousand."

"I will have Jim Burrell, the liveryman, drive you out to the farm. Jim weighs a hundred and ninety pounds of wildcat fighting meat. Also he has a note coming due next month, and he wants an extension. He's not a killer, exactly, but he has crippled up three or four. I'll speak to him, and he'll take you out and bring you back—safely."

Bernardo reflected a moment.

"Who's going to handle the kale?" he asked. "I couldn't do business out there with this livery-stable chauffeur carrying the money. It wouldn't look right, Mr. Rockbone. I'm a great believer in making the big impression—"

"You'll look after the money," Rockbone assured him, "and Burrell will look after you."

"Fair enough," the showman agreed. "But don't send me out there with a lone thousand. Let me carry two thousand. A big roll makes a big flash. Show a bunch of money, in real cash, and most people lose their sense of value."

It was not in the banker's nature to part with much money, even temporarily. Bernardo sensed an objection.

"Let me dazzle her with a lot of dough," he insisted. "We all throw the bluff—you with your mahogany desk and white necktie, and me with this Southern Senator make-up I'm wearing. Let's play the game right. Your money's safe when your two-fisted friend's along, ain't it?"

"Maybe you're right," Rockbone said.

"You know I am," Bernardo thumped the desk with a convincing fist. "When you're on a deal like this, you've got to



"MRS. MCADAMS, THESE PIES MAKE A BOY OF ME AGAIN!"

have everything to work with. I've got to look like ready money and plenty of it."

So, before the hour was out, he was on the way to the McAdams farm, with twenty crisp hundred-dollar bills in his wallet. Beside him sat Jim Burrell. Bernardo had the

unsigned deed in his pocket and his instructions firmly in mind.

#### IV

CUSTOMERS who entered the bank that morning found the president in exceedingly

good cheer. From time to time he softly whistled snatches of old-time melodies. He looked at his watch a dozen times, and calculated how soon he might expect the return of Bernardo—an hour to drive out, an hour, say, to put the deal through, and an hour to return. Soon after lunch-time the paper that would make the place his would be securely locked in the vault.

And for a thousand dollars! The puttering old real-estate agent in Hillville who had been trying to sell it had held it at three thousand. If the old idiot had any gumption, he could have advertised it in a Northern newspaper and turned it over for twice that much. Twenty acres of peach-trees, to bear fruit for the first time this summer! Twenty acres of reasonably good land—and a four-room house!

Rockbone stepped to the door of the bank and took a look at the clear blue sky. A fine, early, balmy spring, with the month of May only a few days away. No chance now for a nipping frost to kill those peaches. Oh, it was great to be smart and keen in business; to see opportunity and grasp it! Surely to those who seek shall be given. Whence came this providential Bernardo? Wastrel, wanderer—yet a valuable instrument in the hands of a man with brains. Verily it was a fine day!

Rockbone's midday meal at the Mansion House was eaten with relish. By George, they must have a new cook! He was tempted to leave a quarter tip for the waitress, but on second thought made it a dime. There is no good in being foolish, even when one's affairs are prospering.

His good humor continued until the wheel of Jim Burrell's buckboard scraped the curb in front of the bank. Bernardo alighted with a bound and burst into the bank.

"I landed her!" he cried triumphantly, as he pulled a chair close to Rockbone's desk. He tossed his hat on the floor and produced the signed deed. "It took two thousand, but, my boy, the farm's yours!"

The banker's face hardened into a bitter scowl.

"Two thousand dollars!" There was accusation in his words. "The price was to have been one thousand—"

"I'd have landed her for one thousand, too, if—"

"Why didn't you?"

"Because everything worked against me. Here was this old lady sitting on the porch,

rocking and listening to me make myself agreeable. She wanted to sell the place, too. She admitted it. We talked sale, in general terms, and I was just making up my mind to offer her the thousand, when a yellow, half-grown pup came dancing all over the porch—"

Rockbone snorted.

"Listen, Mr. Banker. That little frisking devil came right over to me, jumped up with his paws in my lap, and tried to lick my face. I knew right then that Mrs. McAdams wasn't going to sell that farm with that pup on it for any one thousand dollars. Before that, I could have bought it for a thousand. I could tell by the look on her face; but when she saw that pup she changed expression, somehow, and I knew she wouldn't take a cent less than eleven hundred."

The disgust and chagrin on the banker's face deepened.

"Well, then, did you offer her the eleven hundred?"

"No, I didn't," Bernardo explained. "I could see she was anxious to sell, but I didn't want to rush her. I had to play her easy, and I was just getting ready to spring the eleven hundred in cash when she thought about the pies she'd left in the oven. She went in for a minute, and when she opened that stove door and the smell of those pies came out—" He stopped to inhale reflectively. "The odor of that home cooking! I said to myself right then that I knew mighty well I'd never get her away from that old homestead for any measly eleven hundred."

Rockbone could not suppress a low groan.

"It was my money!" he murmured.

"If you'd had just one whiff of those pies you'd understand. You wouldn't have had the nerve to offer her less than another hundred." Bernardo patted the banker on the shoulder confidentially. "When she came out, we began getting down to business. She said she was willing to sell very cheap for cash, because she wanted to go live with her daughter. I was just about to say twelve hundred, and—"

"And what?" Rockbone asked desperately.

"A meadow-lark! It had a yellow breast like pure gold—and it started to sing. Say, when it began to warble out those notes, clear, clean, sweet—well, it slammed a thrill into me that I hadn't had in years. She said she loved to hear a lark sing, and I



knew then and there I wasn't going to get that place for any twelve hundred. I would look cheap to offer it, and it would have queered the whole deal."



"YOU CROOK! YOU SWINDLER! CHARLATAN! FAKER! YOU CHEATED—YOU ROBBED THAT POOR WOMAN!"

"Why didn't you try it, anyway?" the banker demanded, writhing in his chair.

Bernardo gazed at him pityingly.

"Evidently you've forgotten the song of the lark, and what it does to a woman," he said. "Women are sentimental that way. She called my attention to a robin that hopped right up near the porch. This bird cocked his head over on one side, and looked at us like he wanted to join in the confab. You know yourself that a place that's got robins and larks on it is no cheap skate of a farm. Listen"—he leaned over close and almost whispered it—"there was a linnet, but she overlooked it. Old Eagle Eye saw it, though."

The banker pressed a palm to his brow.

"I was just opening my mouth to offer her, say, fourteen hundred when a barefoot boy came up on the porch—"

"And touched your heart for another hundred, I suppose?"

The sarcasm of the question was venomous, but there was more of pain than resentment in the hypnotist's glance.

"You shouldn't say that so lightly," he protested. "Say, how long has it been since you went barefoot, Mr. Rockbone?"

A twitching muscle in the banker's cheek warned him that his question was not well received.

"Anyway," Bernardo resumed, "the kid had a fishing-pole and—get this—he said: 'Grandma, I'm goin' to wade in that crick, and I'm goin' to ketch a mess of perch fer supper. I know where they're bitin' down under that big elm-tree.' When he went off, she told me that he had taken off his shoes and stockings to-day for the first time this spring. Then she asked me right out if I was aiming to pay all cash, or part down. I was thinking of offering her fifteen hundred, anyway—"

"Why didn't you? You'd already squandered five hundred—"

"A flock of cackling, frying-sized, yellow-legged chickens came scurrying out of the orchard. Mister, do you like fried chicken, spring chicken, crisp and brown? I don't mean the kind you get in hotels; I'm speak-

ing of the kind your mother used to fry on Sunday—fried chicken, with mashed potatoes whipped to a cream. Remember how she always used to put a big hunk of melting butter in the center of the dish, and how it would run out over the potatoes in little yellow streams? I ask you, what would you give for a plate of that kind of fried chicken and mashed potatoes?"

A curious thing had happened to Rockbone. His eyes were half closed. He seemed to be dreaming.

"You forgot something," he said softly. "You forgot the gravy!"

"Yes, and biscuits light and fluffy," Bernardo added with ardor; "and a steaming dish of succotash, green corn and beans, cooked together. If it hadn't been for that flock of chickens bringing up the picture of an old-home dinner, I'd have been all right. As it was, I couldn't consider offering her less than—"

The banker stopped Bernardo's discourse with a gentle hand on his shoulder.

"There ought to be dessert with that meal," he suggested. "Peaches and cream—"

"I thought of the same thing," Bernardo agreed eagerly. "I'll swear I did! You know those twenty acres of peach-orchard out there are all in bloom, and you can smell peach-blossoms all over the place. It's enough to turn a man's head! You know, she's got beehives, too. Bees buzz all over that place. Every time I heard them, I got a vision of golden honey in the comb—you know, great masses of it. Did you ever eat a slick of home-made bread and butter, smeared all over with this yellow honey a half-inch thick, when you was a kid? I mean, when you was real hungry. The stuff gets your fingers all sticky, but—"

The banker nodded almost imperceptibly. For a time the two sat as if dreaming.

"A young farmer and his wife drove past in a buggy," Bernardo resumed. "They had a baby; a little red-faced thing, all wrapped up in a blue-flannel blanket. I got a glimpse of its two little fists. Rockbone, you old codger, I've never been married. Have you?"

Malicious tongues had said, in times past, that Rockbone had been too stingy to support a wife. He did not reply to the question until he had coughed ostentatiously.

"No—never."

"The road runs close to the house—so close I could see the look on that young

mother's face. And while I was looking, down the road comes a pair of lovers—regular story-book boy and girl sweethearts."

The banker's lips puckered and he whistled something under his breath which, to Bernardo, sounded like a bit of an old, old song: "We Wandered To-Day to the Hills, Maggie." He broke it off.

"Tell me, did she have yellow hair?" he queried.

"Who?"

"The lad's sweetheart."

"Did she? It was spun gold, crinkly gold, and she wasn't a day over seventeen. They came around the curve of the road. The buggy stopped, and they began to talk. The girl lifted down the baby and held it. Her arms just seemed to twine around it, and she snuggled it close. The wind blew her hair around her face. She was slim, and her complexion was clean, and I thought if I had my life to live over again—"

Rockbone dropped his hand to Bernardo's knee.

"I think I used to know her mother," reverentially said the man who had been accused of being too stingy to marry. "She had golden hair, too."

"The old lady on the porch was looking out on the young couple," Bernardo resumed. "'Neighbors,' she said. I knew right then that if I wanted to buy that farm I'd have to act quick. I slammed it at her—the whole two thousand! I piled it in her lap and got her name on the deed before she had time to get her breath. And I thought, after all, she'd never sign—her hand trembled so."

Again the two sat in silence. Rockbone's face wore a far-away light, reflected back through some magic from the years that had gone before. Gradually it began to fade. He remembered that, after all, he was a banker.

Bernardo waited in vain for a word of approval. The banker was making aimless pencil-marks on a tab. The softness had vanished from his face. Presently his eyes, level and cold, met the hypnotist's.

"That story you have just finished telling me is very good, but it isn't worth a thousand dollars!" he snapped.

Bernardo got his meaning instantly.

"I paid her exactly two thousand dollars, just as I told you," he said.

"Oh, I'll admit that your story appealed to me!"

A quick flush showed on the showman's cheeks.

"I know; you think I crooked you," he said quietly. "Think what you like. The place is dirt cheap at two thousand. She'd been holding it for three thousand. All right—you can keep the fifty dollars' commission. I don't want it. I'll make you a present of it. When's the next train out of this town?"

Rockbone smiled grimly.

"No, my friend," he said. "You won't leave until we are straight. I don't want to accuse you unjustly, and I don't want to make you any trouble, but—well, there's a sheriff in this town, to say nothing of Jim Burrell. It's your move. What's your decision in the matter?"

He waited calmly. Bernardo the Great lit a cigar.

"Your two thousand dollars, Mr. Rockbone, is probably in the blue-china teapot on the top shelf of the pantry out at Mrs. McAdams's," he said.

"Do you expect me to believe that?"

"Mr. Rockbone," Bernardo said earnestly, "I don't care whether you believe me or not. I didn't cheat you. I meant to follow out your instructions, but something happened to me—I don't know what it was. If you don't believe me, go out there yourself. It'll hit you, too."

The banker reached for his desk telephone and got Jim Burrell on the wire.

"Jim," he said, "I want you to drive me and my friend back out to the McAdams place right away. Better put a gun on your hip, too; we might have a little rough work!"

He snapped up the receiver.

"Sounds like Western stuff from the movies, doesn't it?" Bernardo asked lightly.

"Yes, rather; but you needn't mind if you're on the square. If you liked the place so well, you won't mind another little drive out there."

Bernardo smiled affably.

"Let's not be sore at each other, Rockbone," he said pleasantly. "I'll be glad to go out. After all, that story did sound kind of fishy, didn't it?"

"It did."

"Yes, sir, that was perhaps the fishiest, most improbable tale any man ever tried to put over on a hard-headed banker." The hypnotist blew a great cloud of cigar-smoke and contemplated its twistings. "The pe-

culiar thing about it," he added thoughtfully, "is that it happens to be true!"

## V

It was a winding, rocky road that took them out toward the farm. At times the buckboard spun rapidly down sudden slopes, with loose stones rattling under the horses' feet. Again Rockbone and Bernardo swayed back against the seat as they struck an up-hill grade.

"I'm enjoying this ride," the hypnotist remarked. "How long has it been, Mr. Rockbone, since you were out this way?"

Something in the keen, sweet air had tempered the banker's feelings. His eyes wandered along the green, growing things on the hillside.

"About eight years," he said. "I stick pretty close to business."

Bernardo tapped him on the shoulder and pointed toward the southwest, where another range of the Ozarks rose from the far edge of a green valley. A bluish haze hung about the distant hills.

"It's a fine country you have down here. Just look at that view! It'll do you good to get away from business once in a while, Mr. Rockbone."

There was a trace of pride in the banker's voice.

"It's the prettiest country you'll find!"

Bernardo waved an arm toward the valley below them.

"What's that crop coming up now?" he inquired.

"Corn. That's good bottom land. The rains of hundreds of years have washed the earth from the hillsides down there. It's rich."

Jim Burrell, emotionless, clucked to his horses. They clattered on. The three men were silent. Rockbone was, perhaps, more interested in the scenery than the others. He knew the country well, but he suddenly realized that he had almost forgotten it.

After all, he told himself, it is the land that counts. The money piled away in the banks of the world is but a symbol of value. It is the earth and the waters and the things that grow green that have solid worth. Yes, he must get out into the country oftener! It helps a man to keep his perspective on values.

The jolting of the buckboard was not unpleasant. It reminded him of the days when he used to drive a rickety buggy over similar roads, years ago. From a field a

dog raced away from his master, and came with a wild rush up the road to bark at the passing vehicle—a bark that was a greeting, for he trotted contentedly beside the horses for a while, then dropped back to return and assist his master in faded blue overalls with the spring plowing.

From a turn in the road, Bernardo looked back at the dog that was then frisking ahead of the plow.

"He's hunting field-mice," Rockbone remarked wisely. "I've seen 'em do it a hundred times."

They came to the farm. The small white house stood back from the road. Back beyond it was the pink, flowering peach orchard. Together they passed through the gate of a spotlessly white picket fence. The traces of recent whitewash were still visible on the grass beneath.

Jim Burrell was hitching his horses.

"I'll set out here in the rig," he said, "till you gents are through."

The barefoot boy came skipping down the path to meet the visitors, the yellow pup frolicking at his heels.

"Hello, mister!" he shouted to Bernardo. "You come back to see grandma? She's makin' bread in the kitchen."

He gazed at the stranger, Rockbone. The banker smiled genially.

"Hello, sonny!"

"I'm goin' fishin'," the lad remarked, as he fell in with them and walked toward the house. "Think they ought to be bitin' now down in the crick. Been waitin' for my chum to come over. Look!" He paused and stuck out one soiled foot. "Took my shoes and stockin's off to-day, an' I got a stone bruise already!"

The pup, feeling that he should attract some attention, began a futile attempt to leap high enough to kiss the banker.

"What do you call him?" asked the new owner of the farm, making an awkward attempt to pet the dog.

"Bruno," said the lad. "Hi, Bruno!"

He streaked away, with the pup in full pursuit, from one tree to another, with sharp, quick turns. They returned, both panting.

Grandma McAdams appeared on the porch—buxom, gray, rosy of cheek. Hastily she doffed her blue apron.

"Why, Mr.—Mr. Bernardo!" she exclaimed. "I didn't expect you back so soon."

The hypnotist led the banker up to her.

"This is the man I bought the place for," he said. "You surely know Mr. Rockbone, the banker—"

The kindly old face beamed.

"Why, Mr. Rockbone, I ain't seen you in ages! How do you do?" She extended a hospitable hand. "Not since we had that there deal of my husband's. Seems like there was a little difference or something, but I remember you settled it all right."

Mr. Rockbone was sincerely thankful her memory in the matter was poor, for he blushed to think how he had settled it. He shook her hand and murmured a confused greeting. Out through the front door came a tempting, homely odor of something baking. Bernardo sniffed.

"It's my batch of bread," Mrs. McAdams explained. "Set down in the chairs here on the porch a minute, gentlemen. I must go to the kitchen. I'll be back in just a minute!"

So they sat and surveyed as much of the farm as they could see. It was as Bernardo had said. The soft wind swept the fragrance of the blossoming peach-trees to their nostrils. The bees hummed.

"Look, look!" Bernardo placed a cautioning hand on the banker's sleeve. "Over by that bush—look at him!"

Rockbone saw the robin.

"Well, I'll be damned!" he said softly.

"You know, I like a robin, but they haven't any sense—not a lick. A sparrow can walk right up and take a worm out of their mouth; but I like 'em."

The chickens came cackling in low gutturals around the corner of the porch, scratching here and there, and ever eager to flock to a new place.

From far over on the other side of the fields came the raucous cawing of a flock of crows, circling aloft. Again there was the humming of bees. From somewhere in the direction of the barn came the nicker-ing of a colt. The air was soft and warm, and the sky was dappled with cotton clouds. It was easy for the two men to loll back comfortably in their chairs.

Mrs. McAdams appeared on the porch with a black tin tray. There were two glasses of rich, creamy milk, two huge wedges of warm apple pie, crisp and brown and sugared on top. She had her best napkins out, her best china, and her best silver.

"I thought you might like a bite to eat," she said apologetically. "I didn't do very



well on them pies, but maybe you can eat them."

She hadn't done well on the pies! Ah, the eternal feminine! As if she *ever* failed to do well on apple pie! The dash of cinnamon in them gave a flavor that made Rockbone forget he had ever eaten a meal in the Mansion House; and Bernardo, the survivor of a hundred small-town hotels, was mute.

"Mrs. McAdams," said the banker, his mouth filled, "these pies make a boy of me again!"

She blushed happily.

"Some time," she said, "some time before I move away, you come out and I'll cook you up a dinner."

"Where were you going to move to?" he asked.

"Over with my married daughter and her husband at Eureka," she said. "It's hard to move away, but I guess—"

Rockbone rose almost abruptly.

"May we look around the place?" he asked.

"Why, certainly—it's yours now." There was a quaver in her voice. "I've lived here for so long—"

Hastily she entered the house.

The men strolled about the place. They exchanged no words. Out in the peach orchard there was a serene quiet. The ground under their feet exhaled an odor of spring. The perfume of it was everywhere. Both breathed deeply of it.

As they emerged on the other side, they saw a neighbor's boy plowing a little patch of corn. For a time they leaned silently on the rail fence and watched him.

Suddenly a lark burst forth, enchantment pouring from his throat.

Later they came to a spring that trickled out of a little hillside. There was an old dipper on the white rock, and they drank their fill of clean, cold water. Both were breathing deeper than usual, filling their lungs with the balmy spring air.

As they approached the house again, a buggy creaked along the road, returning from town. It was the young farmer, his young wife—and the baby. And, as if it were a piece of artistic stagecraft, came from the other direction the lovers—the girl with the slender form and the crinkly gold hair.

Rockbone turned on Bernardo.

"You crook!" he said with mock ferocity. "You swindler! Charlatan! Faker!

You cheated—you robbed that poor woman! You bought this Arkansas heaven—this little chunk out of paradise—for a measly two thousand dollars! You almost made me a party to your swindle, too; but you can't get away with it. She was holding this place for three thousand, and you talked her into selling it for two. Well, I'm going to tear up the deed and write a new one for three!"

Bernardo eyed him quite seriously.

"In the language of the hyp show," he said, "you are now under the spell."

Rockbone cut him short.

"You think I'm crazy, don't you? But I'm sane—suddenly sane. Furthermore, I'm going to have Mrs. McAdams's married daughter and her husband come over here and run the place, and the old lady is going to stay right here. I'll give them the lowest rent in the county—"

"As I was saying," Bernardo resumed, stopping and leaning comfortably against a grindstone, "you're under the spell. I couldn't hypnotize a smart man like you—not if I tried a lifetime; but you've fallen for the great hypnotizer—which is spring. You don't know it, Rockbone, but that's what got to you. The long, green fingers of the trees reached out and touched your hard old heart. It's old stuff, I know—but it works on all of us."

Rockbone scowled at him.

"I won't pay you that fifty dollars' commission. I'll pay you a hundred—shut up! We're coming out here fishing to-morrow, with Jeff Spriggins, *alias* Henry Ghostman, to dig worms, with the kid and the pup. I want you to be here! You need something like this, you do. This wholesome country life will give you a whole new view-point."

Bernardo shook his head sadly.

"I can't come," he said, "unless—"

"Unless what?"

"Unless you can hypnotize Mrs. McAdams into cooking us that dinner we talked about. Of course, if that is possible—"

The sky was throbbing with a million stars. The hills to the south were silvered by a thin moon. Sitting beside the open window in his room at the Mansion House, Bernardo gazed out over the fairy vista for hours. He lit his last cigar of the night, and for the first time he felt that he really was Bernardo the Great.

# The Odd Measure

The Exiled  
Mekhitarist  
Monks of  
Armenia

*One of the  
Countless Minor  
Problems of the  
Peace Conference*

THE vast complexity of minor problems that the international peace conference has to deal with, or has been asked to deal with, is illustrated by the appeal of the banished Mekhitarist monks of Armenia for the right to return to their native land after more than two hundred years of exile.

The ancient Armenian church—which proudly claims to be the oldest national church in Christendom—was long bitterly divided by a controversy concerning the twofold nature of Christ. The Mekhitarists—so called from their founder, Mekhitar da Petro—took a strong stand against the Patriarch of Armenia, and in the first years of the eighteenth century they were banished from the country. Pope Clement XI received them into the Roman faith, and they were established in a monastery in the Morea. Driven thence by the Turks, they found refuge on the tiny island of San Lazzaro, in the lagoons of Venice. There their colony remains to this day, its numbers maintained by recruits from the homeland, and there is also a branch in Vienna.

Mekhitar da Petro planned a revival of literature and culture in Armenia, and during their long exile his followers have devoted themselves steadily to their founder's ideal. They have at San Lazzaro an elaborate printing establishment, from which the world of letters has received carefully prepared editions of the classic writings of Armenia, besides translations of Eusebius, Philo, and other sources of early Christian history. That the new Armenia would be the gainer by having within its boundaries this group of scholars seems to be certain.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Map of  
Europe  
Many Times  
Redrawn

*Four Earlier  
Conferences That  
Attempted a  
Final Settlement*

THERE is a measure of the march of democracy in Europe in the fact that at the peace conference held in Paris after the Crimean War there were no plain "misters" around the table; every one was at least an earl or a pasha. But the sixty-four years that have passed since then have made but little difference in the matter of secrecy and hush. Count Walewski, president of the conference of 1855, tried not merely to keep the public in the dark, but to keep the delegates in the dark. The British were in one room, the French in another, and the Russians in a third, while the count wandered from room to room with nods and whispers. Secrecy was then the very air breathed by diplomats, and "open covenants of peace, openly arrived at," still seem to be more or less of an iridescent dream.

In the last three centuries there have been many peace conferences and many peace treaties. In 1648 the treaty of Westphalia put an end to the Thirty Years' War and introduced the "balance of power" to Europe. That conference was remarkable for the fact that it sat in two parts, one at Münster and the other at Osnabrück, because Sweden refused to meet the papal nuncio. In 1713 the treaty of Utrecht put an end to the War of the Spanish Succession and gave Gibraltar, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and the Hudson Bay Territory to England, laying the foundation of the British Empire.

The Congress of Vienna, in 1814 and 1815, planned something like a league of nations which it called the Holy Alliance, and the Emperor Francis of Austria is said to have spent sixteen million dollars in entertaining the delegates with reviews, balls, and festivals. The members of the Holy Alliance decided to hold periodical meetings for the maintenance of peace in Europe, and such meetings were held in 1818, 1821, and 1822 in this

futile attempt to govern the world by international committee. The autocratic sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, the most active members of the league, proved to be less anxious to promote the liberty of the world than to safeguard themselves against any menace from the rising forces of democracy. England, under the enlightened leadership of Canning, dropped out of the alliance, and it passed from the stage of history.

The treaty of San Stefano, in 1878, closed the Russo-Turkish War, but England and Austria were not satisfied, and a new congress was called at Berlin, which set up an autonomous Bulgaria, gave Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria, and called on Turkey to carry out reforms in Armenia. It has been repeatedly asserted that the treaty of Berlin, signed forty-one years ago, was primarily responsible for the war we are now trying to end by a new treaty of Paris or Versailles. History has an unpleasant habit of repeating itself.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Conference  
in Paris  
May Have  
Seemed Slow

*But Some Earlier  
Peace Congresses  
Deliberated for  
Several Years*

THERE is another interesting point of comparison between the conference of 1919 and those of older date, and here the men of to-day have the best of the showing. In spite of the impatience with which many of us have watched their proceedings, it must be admitted that considering the magnitude and difficulty of the problems they have had to solve they have been more expeditious than their predecessors. True, the Congress of Berlin was in session only a month—June 13 to July 13, 1878—but its task was comparatively trifling—merely to revise the treaty signed three months before by Russia and Turkey. The other conferences mentioned in the preceding article took vastly longer to complete their work.

The first negotiations that were to culminate in the treaty of Westphalia began in 1637, and resulted in the calling of an international congress in 1642. The delegates, however, did not meet till 1645, and they remained in session for more than three years, peace being finally signed October 24, 1648.

The conference at Utrecht met in January, 1712—"after tedious preliminaries," the record adds. As it proved impossible, after more than a year's work, to settle matters in a general treaty, the representatives of the various belligerents drew up a number of separate agreements, the first of which was signed April 13, 1713, and the last not until February 6, 1715.

Although Napoleon had abdicated April 11, 1814, the date fixed for the opening of the Congress of Vienna was August 1 of that year, and the delegates did not actually meet until the middle of September. Their great enemy's escape from Elba and the meteoric episode of the Hundred Days did not interrupt their proceedings, but it was not until June 9, 1815, that they promulgated their "final act"—to which the shattering of Napoleon's army at Waterloo, just nine days later, gave assured validity.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Passing of  
Thackeray's  
Daughter

*For Many Years  
Lady Ritchie Was  
Her Father's  
Constant  
Companion*

THE recent death of Lady Ritchie, Thackeray's eldest daughter, at Freshwater, in the Isle of Wight, snaps many links with the past. She walked with her father up Piccadilly, and saw the Duke of Wellington in dark-blue frock coat and strapped trousers; she saw the funeral of Napoleon at the Invalides; she went to parties at Dickens's house, and met Charlotte Brontë at her own; she remembered John Leech, beautifully dressed and riding a shining black horse, and she often called on Mrs. Carlyle in Chelsea.

Anne Isabella Thackeray was born in London in 1838, a year after young Queen Victoria came to the throne, and with a brief interval of a few years in Paris she was her father's constant companion in Young Street, in Onslow Square, and Palace Green, until, in 1877, she married her cousin, Richmond Ritchie, of the India Office. Her first successful novel, "The Story of Elizabeth," was written in 1863; "Old Kensington"

appeared in 1873, and its old, "brown, bow-windowed house" and the rest in the so-called Old Street of the story is an exact description of Young Street, where she lived with her father in 1846.

She printed a number of essays in 1883, while her later and more mature works were biographical and reminiscent. She had a good memory, she could tell an anecdote charmingly, and in "Chapters From Some Memoirs" she shows her gift for dainty portraiture. For each volume of her father's works in the Biographical Edition she wrote an introduction which not only displays her own talent, but is a graceful tribute to that great man.

Lady Ritchie bore her years as gracefully as her title, which came to her when her husband was knighted for his work in the India Office.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Brook Farm  
As It Appears  
To-day**

*Not Peopled by  
Melancholy  
Ghosts, but by  
Merry Children*

WHERE the Brook Farmers made their experiment, nearly eighty years ago, in transcendental socialism, or socialistic transcendentalism, or whatever may be the exact formula of their short-lived Utopia, are now the buildings of an orphans' home. These barracklike structures, homely and severe, but not unattractive—indeed, rather picturesque in the fleeting view of the passer-by in his car—mark the place where George Ripley, Charles A. Dana, John Sullivan Dwight, William Ellery Channing, and Nathaniel Hawthorne thought and toiled and tasted the sweets of hope and the bitterness of failure.

But suppose you have been reading "The Blithedale Romance"—as no doubt people do read it, even in these busy times—and you decide to go to West Roxbury and see the very spot where Hawthorne tried to be a plowman. You expect to see lonely fields, with spectral figures moving among old trees and moldering houses—a scene haunted by hopelessly melancholy ghosts. You arrive at playtime. The children are romping about, the air rings with their shouts and laughter. Brook Farm is a place of life and joy. Even if you are not much of a sentimentalist—you have proved yourself, by your pilgrimage, somewhat inclined that way—you find it hard to hold to your preconception of Brook Farm as "an immortal failure."

\* \* \* \* \*

**To Make  
Rome a  
Seaport**

*The Modern  
Revival of a  
Very Ancient  
Project*

THE King of Italy recently opened the first section of the electric railway from Rome to Ostia, built during the war by Austrian and Hungarian prisoners. During the days of Rome's ancient greatness, Ostia was the seaport of the imperial city. Her earliest traditions date back to Ancus Martius and the seventh century B.C., but her greatest importance was under the emperors, when she was the emporium of a rich commerce. Here were landed the obelisks that the Romans were so fond of bringing from Egypt; hither came marble from Paros and Eubœa, granite from Libya, and corn, wine, and oil from a score of fertile provinces along the shores of the Mediterranean.

The modern Ostia is a shabby village clustered about a medieval castle, on a marshy and malarious plain. A short mile distant, beside the rushing, muddy stream of the Tiber, is Old Ostia, a deserted city almost as well preserved as Pompeii itself, with mansions, warehouses, and temples. Its main street ran parallel to the river, passing a spacious colonnaded forum. At one end of this open space stood the city theater—an institution of every Roman town. A large building near by was the barracks of the *vigiles*, the civic guards who united the duties of the modern police and fire departments. There is also a curious temple of Mithras, an Eastern divinity whose cult seems to have been popular with the Romans of the empire—a small, windowless chamber for the performance of secret rites. The excavation of the ruins was begun fifty or sixty years ago by Pius IX, and since the passing of the papal power it has been carried on by the Italian govern-



ment. There is still much work to do at Ostia, and for a mile around, or more, the lonely pasture-fields are dotted with stumps of ancient columns and littered with fragments of shattered marbles.

The project of giving Rome a port once more has long been under discussion, and an attempt is now being made to construct a harbor, to be connected with the Tiber by a navigable canal. This is a revival of a plan first framed by the Emperor Claudius, who was a great engineer in his day, and who excavated a huge basin near Ostia for his ships of war and commerce. When Claudius's docks silted up, Trajan dug a new channel; and long afterward Paul V, the Pope who completed St. Peter's, reopened it. The chief difficulty has always been the mud brought down by the Tiber, which in the last eighteen hundred years has built the shore two miles out into the sea beyond the ancient coast-line.

The development of Ostia as a port for Rome is part of a wide plan for the commercial future of Italy. As a result of the war, Italy now sees herself as the fourth power of the world, ranking after America, Britain, and France. She is not rich, she lacks coal and iron, but she has ambitious leaders, skilled craftsmen, and a great asset in her abundant supply of industrious workers. Her population is now about equal to that of France, and it increases so rapidly that she will soon be incontestably the most numerous of the Latin nations. She has not forgotten Rome's glory as the mistress of the civilized world, and she is determined to make the Eternal City the worthy capital of a progressive modern nation.

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### The Bolshevism of Eighty Years Ago

*Rise and Fall of  
the Chartist  
Movement in  
England*

**A**MONG the laboring classes in England, in the middle thirties of the last century, there arose a wave of discontent and revolution that bore a strange resemblance to modern upheavals commonly grouped as Bolshevistic.

The Chartist movement, as it is known, was accompanied by wild threats of violence, inflammatory speeches, and sporadic riots. Its leaders were divided into physical-force men and moral-force men. Class war was preached openly. A back-to-the-land campaign was inaugurated, the aim of which was to make England a land of small farmers instead of a nation of large estates and concentrated industries. O'Brien, the Chartist schoolmaster, and an adventurer named Feargus O'Connor were the early protagonists of this formidable uprising. The middle classes were in something like a panic. The Duke of Wellington enrolled two hundred thousand special constables to insure public safety. There were cannon in the squares of the big cities, and dragoons with drawn swords rode through the streets.

As commonly happens with such movements, the leadership of the Chartists passed more and more into the hands of the extremists, the advocates of physical force. The most prominent was Ernest Jones, a young lawyer born and educated in Germany. He was a man of much ability and of good social standing, but as a Chartist orator he outspokenly advocated revolution. He did not use such modern terms as "soviet," "general strike," and "the iron march of labor," but he urged the setting up of a national assembly, a "universal cessation of labor," and the formation of a national guard of armed workers. Finally the government took action, and one day, when Jones thundered that "soon the green flag of the Chartists would be flying over Downing Street," he was arrested and sentenced to two years in jail. When he came out, Chartism was dead.

"Chartism," says Carlisle, "meant the bitter discontent grown fierce and mad, the wrong condition, therefore, or the wrong disposition, of the working classes."

Wrong condition and wrong disposition alike have much to do with the discontent now blazing or smoldering in so many countries.

# THE STAGE

EXCITEMENT VERSUS PROFIT IN THE THEATRICAL GAME, WITH A FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT OF HOW ONE MANAGER TRIED TO AVOID PRODUCING A SUCCESS

By Matthew White, Jr.

IN a season so largely devoted—outside of war plays—to jazz and farce, there is special joy in welcoming an arrival such as “Molière,” by Philip Moeller, which Henry Miller produced at the Liberty Theater on March 17. As I did not care for young Mr. Moeller’s previous dip into French history with his “Mme. Sand” for Mrs. Fiske, I am more than pleased to express satisfaction with his attempt to revivify France’s great classic dramatist. To be sure, the last of the three acts is disappointing, but an author of fiction is always handicapped when dealing with facts. All things considered, I admit that Mr. Moeller is no longer amenable to a criticism which I wrote of him last spring and which exigencies of space crowded out of the department:

Moeller’s premises are all right, but he appears to lack the power of sustained dramatic effort, although his flashes in the pan are so brilliant that they blind us to the presence of the pan itself.

I found both the first and second acts of “Molière” very much worth while—an effect for part of which the playwright has to thank the producer. While Mr. Miller’s own conception of *Molière* left something to be wished for in the way of voice and a compelling personality, other eminent stars, equally handicapped, have frequently come off with less credit; and he has unquestionably laid the theater world of Manhattan under a debt of gratitude for the fine cast and splendid production he has given to an offering, which, like the one now playing in the theater bearing his name, helps to lift this season out of the commonplace.

As I left the Liberty, the name of Blanche Bates—*Montespan*, the mistress of the king—was on all tongues. Holbrook Blinn, as *Louis XIV*, was not far behind her, and showed assured grasp of a character that is, to be sure, brilliantly “fat,” to speak in players’ parlance. Estelle Winwood, the *Armande*, with a great improvement on her work in “A Little Journey,”

completes a quartet of actors who serve the author well.

Her *Montespan* marks another high spot in the career of Miss Bates, who achieved her first Broadway triumph in 1899, just twenty years ago, with *Countess Charkoff* in “The Great Ruby,” a melodrama, at Daly’s. The next season, under Belasco, she was the original *Cho-Cho-San* in “Mme. Butterfly,” long before Puccini’s opera was thought of. In 1901 she became *Cigarette* in Ouida’s “Under Two Flags.” Then, still with Belasco, came her *Yo-San* in “The Darling of the Gods,” and, after two years of that, the creation of another character destined to reach the grand-opera stage—the heroine of “The Girl of the Golden West.”

In 1912 Miss Bates married George Creel, then police commissioner in Denver, and for a time left the stage. She returned in the spring of last year in “Getting Together,” one of the best of the war pieces, in which she was associated with Holbrook Blinn, also a native of the Pacific Coast. In Mr. Blinn’s past I find him set down, in 1905, as *Napoleon* in the musical comedy, “The Duchess of Dantzic”—originally “Mme. Sans-Gêne”—and three years later as *Jim Platt*, leading man with Mrs. Fiske in “Salvation Nell.” In the autumn of 1917 he served as the husband to Grace George in that sterling, but unhappily short-lived war play from the French, “L’Élévation.”

One of the other historical characters in “Molière” is *La Fontaine*, the famous writer of fables, played by Sidney Herbert, an English actor who was educated at the Bluecoat school in London, and who first came to this country in 1886 to act with Mrs. Langtry.

Molière, on the face of it, is an inviting subject about whom to weave a play. His father, who had made money in trade, became a sort of *valet de chambre* to the king, and the son had every prospect of pre-



BLANCHE BATES AS MME. DE MONTESPAN, WITH HENRY MILLER IN THE COSTUME PLAY OF THE LOUIS XIV PERIOD, "MOLIÈRE"

*From a photograph by White, New York*



AUDREY MAPLE, ONE OF THE PRINCIPALS IN THE WINTER GARDEN SHOW, "MONTE CRISTO, JR."

*From a photograph by Gainsborough*

ferment at court, but when only twenty-one he gave up everything for the stage. So unfortunate were his early ventures that he was at one time imprisoned for debt, but in due course he began to write plays himself, as well as to act in them. As fame came to him the great Louis extended the royal favor; but enemies arose on every hand, and their rancor lasted even after his death, necessitating a burial partly secret. Of his marriage at forty to Armande Béjart, a biographer says that "her indiscretions were a source of constant vexation and jealousy" to him.

It is a singular fact that the first pronounced success in a new play that has fallen to Mr. Miller since his new theater was opened on April 1, 1918, should come to him when that house was occupied by another star. But Mrs. Fiske, in "Miss Nelly of N'Orleans," was doing such big business at the Henry Miller that it was not considered wise to move her out.

Ownership of a theater in either New York or London is just now one of the best possible investments. Producers with new plays, and with money to back them, are camping all around both capitals, waiting for a chance to get in. Theaters are few in comparison, and their own-



ers can get almost any terms they choose to ask. If the show fails, out it goes, with no loss to them, and there is always another hopeful producing manager anxiously wait-

Frohman estate, which left to Mr. Frohman's credit only about five hundred dollars, while Al Hayman, his partner in the game, bequeathed several hundred thou-



EILEEN HUBAN, IN THE NEW IRISH PLAY, "DARK ROSALEEN," A BELASCO PRODUCTION

*From a photograph by Abbe, New York*

ing to take his chance at metropolitan favor. In New York the Shuberts are the largest holders of theaters; after them come Klaw & Erlanger.

There has been a good deal of comment on the recent settlement of the Charles

sands to his heirs. But then C. F. took chances for the love of seeing whether his beliefs were justified or not, while men who risked their money rather than their judgments dealt only in cold figures, and seldom, if ever, radiated the warmth of

enthusiasm. Cash, you know, is always cold. It is the tradition of the Rialto that the only New York producers who ever retired from the business with a fortune were Wagenhals & Kemper, who made most of it with "Paid in Full" and "Seven Days."

The other day, in order to obtain first-hand facts on a recent remarkable gamble in plays, I had a chat with John Cort, who, as long as he was content to own a chain of theaters in the Far West, could afford to sit at ease and spend the money that rolled in on him, without staking any of it on the next switch of the public taste for amusements. While there may be security, there is little excitement in this sort of thing; and so, lured by the glitter of the Broadway incandescents, Mr. Cort came East a few years ago, and is now one of the big forces in metropolitan theatricals. And while he still has plenty of money, he can't complain of any lack of excitement in the chase thereof, either.

For instance, take his experience with "Mother Carey's Chickens" a year and a half ago. Here was a play the women were wild about, and at matinées the house was packed, but the men simply would not come to see it, and at night the box-office window was a lonely place. "Flo-Flo" restored the balance of things, and early the next season "Fiddlers Three" was doing finely; but Mr. Cort had a thorn in his side of what I may call a domestic nature.

"It was along about last June," he said, "when my son Harry told me that he had written a musical piece and wanted me to hear it. Well, you know how one is apt to feel about such a thing when it comes out of one's own family. Harry added that he had a collaborator whose shows had made good in Chicago, and that the music was written by a chap who had done the score for 'Town Topics,' one of the many attractions that had succeeded in closing the Century. Even so, I consented to listen with a heavy heart, and with eyes that grew considerably heavier as the thing spun itself out in the parlor of my son's house at Sound Beach, to which I had motored over from Stamford. While Harold Orlob may be there with the jazz when it comes to composing music, he certainly can't play it, so you may imagine the evening I put in, first listening to business that seemed mostly dancing, and then having my ears tortured by an indifferent pianist's efforts to pick out the tunes he had himself written.

"No, Harry," I said, when the ordeal was over. 'The public will never stand for that sort of thing. And the critics—well, panning it would furnish a real holiday for them!'

"The boy took the disappointment very philosophically, as I supposed. Immersed in my own affairs, I soon forgot the episode; but one day, late in the summer, I noticed a certain well-known actress about the office more than once, and casually inquired what she was doing there.

"Oh!" was the answer from one of the force. 'She has been engaged for the widow in "Lester."'

"Lester?" I fairly roared. 'Who's doing that show?'

"You are," came the prompt response.

"Not if I know it first!" I rapped out, and sent for Harry.

"When he appeared, I made it plain to him that a turn-down was a turn-down, whether the fellow who got it happened to be my son or not. He said little and I told myself that there was an end of the affair; but, as it turned out, it was only part of the beginning. Girls galore began to swarm around the offices—more, I realized than we could use in any of the 'Flo-Flo' companies or the new one for 'Fiddlers Three.' I discovered that they had been engaged for the chorus of 'Lester.' Before I could summon adequate language to express my sentiments regarding this show that was being wished on me with such persistence, I received a bill for scenery that flattened me out with the last straw.

"Believe me, I then had a heart-to-heart talk with that boy Harry, only to discover that rehearsals were actually under way.

"Drop over to the Cort some morning, dad, and listen to the music," he said. 'You know Harold is such a bum player, you wouldn't recognize the tunes.'

"Well, you know, there is a point where you get so boiling mad you can't get any madder and just have to back down a bit or bust.

"All right," I told him, with an air of icy coolness.

"Perhaps, too, back in my mind was the recollection of the day when I handed a play script back to a very meek young man who had brought it up to me to read, with a letter from a law firm I knew.

"Not in my line," I had told him, and mentioned another manager to whom he



ALICE BRADY, WHO HAS MADE A DISTINCT HIT IN HER FIRST SEASON AS A SPOKEN-DRAMA  
STAR IN "FOREVER AFTER"

*From her latest photograph—copyrighted by Ira L. Hill, New York*

had better take it. That play was 'On Trial.'

"But to proceed: I listened to 'Lester' once more, and this time I came away with

town, Pennsylvania, where it went fairly well. It passed on for a week in Cleveland, where it was, as we showmen say, a riot; but then came the task of getting a New



EVELYN VARDEN, LEADING WOMAN WITH OTIS SKINNER IN HIS REVIVAL OF  
"THE HONOR OF THE FAMILY"

*From a photograph by the Hixon-Connelly Studio, Kansas City*

the tune of 'Waiting for You' running in my head.

"Realizing that matters had gone so far now that I might as well take a Chinaman's chance, I withdrew all further objections, and the piece was tried out in Johns-

York house. We had no star to advertise, and we wanted to come in during Christmas week, when everybody else was anxious to do the same thing. At last I was offered the Knickerbocker, which had come to be considered half a block below the theatrical



dead-line, and had been closed for a month or two.

"Well," I said to myself, "you are certainly taking a chance with this thing, any way you look at it, so you might as well take a big one." Of course, you know, what Cleveland, Chicago, or any other city thinks of a piece is no criterion of what is going to happen to it on Broadway. We opened on December 23, with 'Dear Brutus' and another musical show against us, and the rest is history. The critics were pleased, the people were enthusiastic, and it looks now as if 'Lester' would go right on playing at the Knickerbocker until September 8, when I have promised to send the original company to London. There you have the story of the musical entertainment that was wished on me. I am convinced that never before has a manager fought so hard against producing a predestined success as I did."

For my part, I am inclined to believe that the very elements in "Listen Lester," which Mr. Cort believed would militate against it were in its favor. One of them is the paucity of story. This naturally would show up as a severe handicap in a reading, but in the case of those who wish to see the piece a second time is an undeniable asset. One becomes a repeater, not for plot's sake, but because of songs, dances, and specialties that please; and in "Listen Lester" these are hung on a thread of just sufficient strength to lift them above a mere mélange of vaudeville turns. Whether its devisers can turn the trick again remains to be seen. At any rate, they are going to make the attempt next season with "Just a Minute."

Meanwhile the custom of affixing tunes of the present to farces of the past goes on merrily, the freshest candidate for favor being "Tumble In," based on "Seven Days," by Avery Hopwood and Mary Roberts Rinehart. My dominant impression of the piece is that with such an avalanche of musical shows as the past season brought down on us, the supply of people who can sing them gave out before "Tumble In" was cast. Indeed, apparently no effort was made to secure experienced singers, for Herbert Corthell—repeating his "Seven Days" character of *Jim Wilson*—and Charles Ruggles—*Dallas Brown*—have both hitherto been identified with the spoken drama, if I may use that term with no relation to motion-pictures.

So has the leading female figure of

"Tumble In"—Peggy O'Neil, who first came under notice as one of the many touring *Pegs*, then shifted to *Maya*, the semi-mystical maiden in "The Flame," and for a brief period last autumn served as the general's chauffeur in the English war play, "By Pigeon Post."

"Tumble In" is Arthur Hammerstein's third musical piece in New York this season—the other two, "Some Time" at the Casino, and "Somebody's Sweetheart" at the Central, being still on view as I write. The new one was made, as to its libretto, by Otto Harbach, with music by Rudolf Friml, who supplied the melodies for "High Jinks" and many previous Hammerstein productions. To my mind the most notable feature about "Tumble In" is the costuming and novelty displayed in some of the numbers, credit for the latter going to a new name on the house bills—Bert French. The whole scheme fits in charmingly with the dainty atmosphere of the Selwyn Theater.

#### THE LURE OF THE BOARDING-HOUSE

A background in stageland usually associated with frosts has this season bounded into constantly increasing favor. "The Big Chance" was the first piece to utilize the home of hash and prunes for a prominent background in its traffic. Then, along about Christmas, came "A Prince There Was," to wobble fearsomely on the throne of popular favor until George Cohan himself stepped into the part which he had rewritten for Robert Hilliard, and which he had, perhaps unconsciously, so thoroughly Cohanized that nobody but George M. could play it properly. The result is so aboundingly satisfying to the public that packed houses every night greet the manager of a quartet of the town's big hits. Cohan would like to take a little rest, and incidentally to look after his business interests, but he is somewhat in the position of the man who had caught the bear by the tail, and would like to let go, but didn't dare.

Now, in the early spring, huge audiences welcome Rachel Crothers's new comedy, "39 East," which is wholly boarding-house, except for an act in Central Park, where the lovers meet by appointment to escape the prying eyes of their fellow boarders. Not in many a year have I seen such clever characterization of the various types to be found in an alleged home of this sort so close to Fifth Avenue as the number would



EDNA HIBBARD, WHO IS KITTY MCNAIR IN THE MUSICAL FARCE, "TUMBLE IN,"  
BASED ON THE COMEDY, "SEVEN DAYS"

*From a photograph by Abbe, New York*

indicate. The Shuberts have provided a perfect cast, headed by Constance Binney and Henry Hull. Miss Binney is deservedly featured, although this rôle of the minister's daughter who comes to New York to sing in a church choir, and ends up in the chorus, is only her second speaking part. Her first was *Lucy Delaney*, a small rôle in the three-week run of "Saturday to Monday," produced by Winthrop Ames at the Bijou Theater in the autumn of 1917. Since then she has been in the movies, along with her sister, Faïre Binney.

Likewise featured as the star boarder, and the pivot of all the trouble that arises, is Henry Hull, one of the three Hull brothers from Louisville. Henry made a large-sized hit the season before last in "The Man Who Came Back," but I like him even better as the young fellow in Rachel Crothers's comedy, who, impressed by the utter innocence of *Penelope Penn*, changes his intentions toward her between breakfast and dinner-time. We were all terribly grieved over the untimely taking off of Shelley Hull in the epidemic of last autumn, but are glad that this clever youngest brother remains to carry on the family name, particularly as the eldest, Howard Hull, since his marriage to Margaret Anglin, has abandoned acting for managing.

Lucia Moore, too, scores mightily as *Mrs. Smith*, the Southern lady of the uncertain forties who desires to appear kittenish. Audiences hang eagerly on the verbal fireworks that sputter between her and the thin-lipped old maid, *Miss McMasters*, played to the



HELEN RAFTERY AS GWENDOLYN FORSYTHE IN THE NEW MUSICAL FARCE, "TAKE IT FROM ME"

From a photograph by Campbell, New York

manner born by Blanche Friderici, who used to be a member of the Crescent Stock Company in Brooklyn. Miss Moore, a Southerner herself, has been with Henry Miller's companies of late.

Alison Skipworth, a landlady utterly new to the stage, inasmuch as she is not of the burlesque type, was last seen here in "Betty at Bay." Mildred Arden, one of the twin sisters who render a piano duet at the boarders' concert in the last act, is a daughter of the late Edwin Arden. Victor Sutherland comes to the part of the comedy young man from stock. He had hoped to play the lead, but he does so well as *Timothy O'Brien* that I am sure New York managers will not let him go back to the provinces.

A noticeable feature about "39 East" is the fact that Miss Crothers shows us a boarding-house many grades above the sort usually affected by authors for stage exploitation. Thus to an old atmosphere she brings a distinctly new background, to which her audiences react with grateful joy.

#### THE PERSISTING DRAMA OF THE WAR

Although it was predicted that the armistice would kill off the war plays, some of them refuse to die—notably "Friendly Enemies," "Three Faces East," and "Forever After." For my part I find that I am more interested in German atrocities now that I know their perpetrators have been worsted than I was while the fighting was still on.

March brought still another drama of the great conflict by no less celebrated a writer than Maeterlinck, whose "Betrothal," a sequel to "The Blue Bird," failed to measure up in popularity with that famous idyl of childhood and magic. "A Burgomaster of Belgium" is an idyl, too, if one may use this term in connection with such horrors as those of the German invasion. The commingling in the burgomaster's brain of the orchid-growing that he loves and the war that he tries to forget is masterfully treated.

The piece was first played in London last January, and an English company was brought over to do it in New York, headed by E. Lyall Swete, under whose direction "The Blue Bird" was first acted at the London Haymarket. Two seasons ago he came to America to put on "Chu Chin Chow," and the following spring he became

an actor again with Ethel Barrymore in "The Off Chance."

The action of "A Burgomaster of Belgium" takes place within one day in the burgomaster's study, and ends in tragedy—the death of the burgomaster at the hands of a German firing-squad, to save his people. The whole is beautifully done, and, whether its popular appeal measures up to the hopes of its sponsors or not, its production is on the credit side of the season's achievements.

As it happens, I did not see "Forever After" until the eighth month of its continuous playing in New York. Its war flavor is slight, but its pull on the tear-ducts is tremendous. A love story of the intense type, with opportunities for its star to be first a girl of sixteen, then a woman of society, and finally a Red Cross nurse overseas, one may imagine the lure such a part would possess for any actress.

Fortunately, Alice Brady measures up to all the requirements. This is the more remarkable when one considers that her previous experience—apart from the rôle of *Meg* in "Little Women," which made but a slight draft on acting ability—has been in musical shows and the movies. No wonder her manager father is proud of the record his daughter has set up in her first essay as a speaking star—an all-season run in a war play that has little comedy to aid it, only powerful interest in its characters, drawn true to life by Owen Davis, whose other plays have been of altogether different nature.

Of invaluable aid to Miss Brady is Conrad Nagel, the youngest leading man on Broadway, he being only twenty-two. From Des Moines, he played there in stock with Fay Bainter, and was discovered by Mr. Brady for the Henry Hull part in a touring troupe of "The Man Who Came Back."

#### A MATING OF ART AND POPULARITY

There is small doubt that Arthur Hopkins's production of "The Jest," with the Barrymores, will go down on the records as the season's high point in artistic finish. Although his part is the less showy one, it was the younger brother, John Barrymore, who brought this great Italian success to the attention of Mr. Hopkins—to whom we are also indebted this year for the presentation of Tolstoy's "Redemption," in which this same John Barrymore has just finished





PEGGY HOPKINS, THE GIRL WHO GETS EVERYBODY INTO TROUBLE AND THUS PRECIPITATES  
THE LAUGHS IN "A SLEEPLESS NIGHT"

*From a photograph by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York*



CONSTANCE BINNEY, LEADING LADY AS PENELOPE PENN IN RACHEL CROTHERS'S NEWEST COMEDY, "39 EAST"

*From a photograph by Aseda, New York*

a six-months' run at the Plymouth. "The Jest" was revealed at the same theater on April 9, with every indication that it will please even more highly.

Sem Benelli, its author, is said to be the youngest playwright in Italy, as well as the most popular. He served more than three years in the Italian army, was wounded, and also decorated for bravery. "The Jest" was first produced ten years ago in Rome, and eleven months later received its Paris *première*, with Sarah Bernhardt in the rôle of the young painter, played here by John Barrymore. Cowardly by nature, he is made the subject of persistent persecution by a captain of mercenaries, who takes his sweetheart from him and makes love to her under his very eyes. Lionel Barrymore invests this character with a heartlessness that makes it stand out with compelling force. Of course, the part is easier to play than the gentle painter's more subtle plotting to get his revenge, which he finally accomplishes by making the other a fratricide.

It is a pleasure to acclaim the progress John Barrymore has made in the art of his father, mother, and sister. He has chosen to mount to the heights rather than to dally along the primrose path of least resistance. Lionel, too, now places a cap-sheaf to his performance of last year in "The Copperhead." Although the first two of the four acts are undeniably the best, "The Jest" as a whole is in every way worthy of the high place in which it has lodged its author. Not only does the acting of the two Barrymores—who played together two years ago in "Peter Ibbetson"—meet all the demands made on them, but the fifteenth-century Florentine settings provided by Robert Edmond Jones fill the eye with a beauty which cannot easily be overpraised.

Who is this Arthur Hopkins who within the space of half a year has given the New York stage two productions that have mated art with popularity? He is no kin to the Charles Hopkins of the Punch and Judy Theater, and my first knowledge of the man, who is not yet forty, was as a vaudeville producer. Then came his presentation of that real novelty in the legitimate, "The Poor Little Rich Girl," followed by the first play to progress backward, as it were—"On Trial." He is also down in the records as the man who inaugurated the five-cent picture show as a separate entertainment. This was in 1905. Ten years later he wrote a formula for picking successes,

which was printed in the *New York Times*. In this he claimed that his estimate of "The Poor Little Rich Girl" before production was as follows: Novelty, 50; human interest, 50; acting opportunity, 50; production opportunity, 50—making a total of 200.

In the same article he admitted that he had erred in assigning a percentage of fifty to the novelty in "Evangeline," which failed completely. He proceeded to wax even more enthusiastic over "The Happy Ending," a piece listed for presentation by him in the ensuing autumn, on which he rated the novelty element at sixty.

"You may check me up on this next fall," he added. "I hope I am right."

He wasn't. "The Happy Ending" proved a flivver of the worst description, lasting but a single week. But Mr. Hopkins wasn't discouraged. After all, isn't it the faculty of being able to keep from losing heart under failures that makes for the greatest successes in the end? That, possibly, and a modest, even demeanor under prosperity—which I can testify that Arthur Hopkins maintains.

#### WHERE "COME-ON CHARLEY" GETS OFF

I confess that whenever I sit facing a production for which there seems to be no sponsor save its author, I invariably fear the worst. I had this feeling at the *première* of "Come-On Charley," set down as a fable in three acts by George V. Hobart, founded on the stories by Thomas Addison. Nor was my confidence restored by noting that out of the twenty-six persons in the cast only two were known to me.

And yet I am now recording that in any popularity that waits on this strikingly odd farce, one of the unknowns, Lynne Overman, is likely to be a leading factor. Overman came direct from vaudeville to create *Charley*, the young man who inherits ten thousand dollars from an uncle, and is made to believe it will be a million by the lawyer who hands it over to him.

The play starts out in a fashion to lead one to fear that he is about to witness a farrago of mere nonsense, but picks up surprisingly in its second scene. At the finish—thanks to the engaging smile of young Overman, the shoe salesman, and the supreme egotism of his self-appointed secretary, played by Frank McCormack—it impresses one as a nonsense play of which the author of "Experience" need not feel ashamed, after all.

# Answered

BY JACK BECHDOLT

Illustrated by Robert W. Stewart

**S**TEEL bars shut Mark Rountree from the light. In the three weeks he had spent in a cell of the Sumas County court-house they had seared their sinister gridiron of shadows on his terrified soul. A massive figure of a man, accustomed always to the most active outdoor life, he had paced that cell all his waking hours in twenty-one days.

Mark Rountree had never before been on the wrong side of the door of a cell. His various dealings outside the law, both violent and crafty, had not heretofore put him in jeopardy beyond the witness-chair; and then there were always hired lawyers ready to spring to his aid.

There was something about this jail cell—the thing he had so often laughed at—that was proving bigger than he was. His helplessness and utter dependence on others were undermining his iron resolution. Contrary to his instinct and despite his experience of the world, Mark Rountree was ready to confess to the murder he had done.

The thing had grown on him gradually, sapping that reckless resolution which had carried him safely past so many reefs. At first it was merely a whimsical speculation.

"Suppose," he thought, "I should tell the truth—" And he had played with the idea.

Of course, he was in no danger. He had engaged as his lawyer one of the sharpest, shrewdest defenders in the Northwest. He also knew he had been arrested only because public opinion had forced the police to a showing of activity.

Really he had nothing to fear. The murder of Ralph Groper was one of those cases, ridiculously bald of detail, that so often baffle the police. Groper had been found dead, shot through the head, in a tangle of underbrush that cumbered the suburban acreage which he and Rountree had recently bought. There were no footprints, no ap-

parent motive, no traces to connect the murder with any person. Reliable witnesses had seen Rountree in his own office, miles away, at the probable time of the crime, though the exact hour could not be fixed.

It was the cage that was breaking Rountree; the cage with its horrid grille-work of bars, its hard concrete floor, its restricted space—hateful to him, a man of action; its smell and taste of imprisoned life.

Portus Judd, the prosecuting attorney, with his massive head and leonine mane, his face a graven mask of inflexible devotion to duty, was the very incarnation of the popular ideal of Justice. But Rountree knew, by his six months' residence in Clakamas, that Portus Judd, for all his awe-inspiring look, was an incompetent bungler who had failed at the private practise of criminal law and found refuge in political office.

Mark Rountree feared neither God nor man, but something in the atmosphere of his cage was breaking down every fiber of his resistance, wearing it away bit by bit, as rain wears down a granite cliff.

The idea he had played with became an obsession. He could stand the terror no longer; he would confess, he—

A breath of air stirred down the corridor, bringing to him the sweetish, sickening pungency of the carbolized disinfectant with which the place was washed. He trembled with nausea.

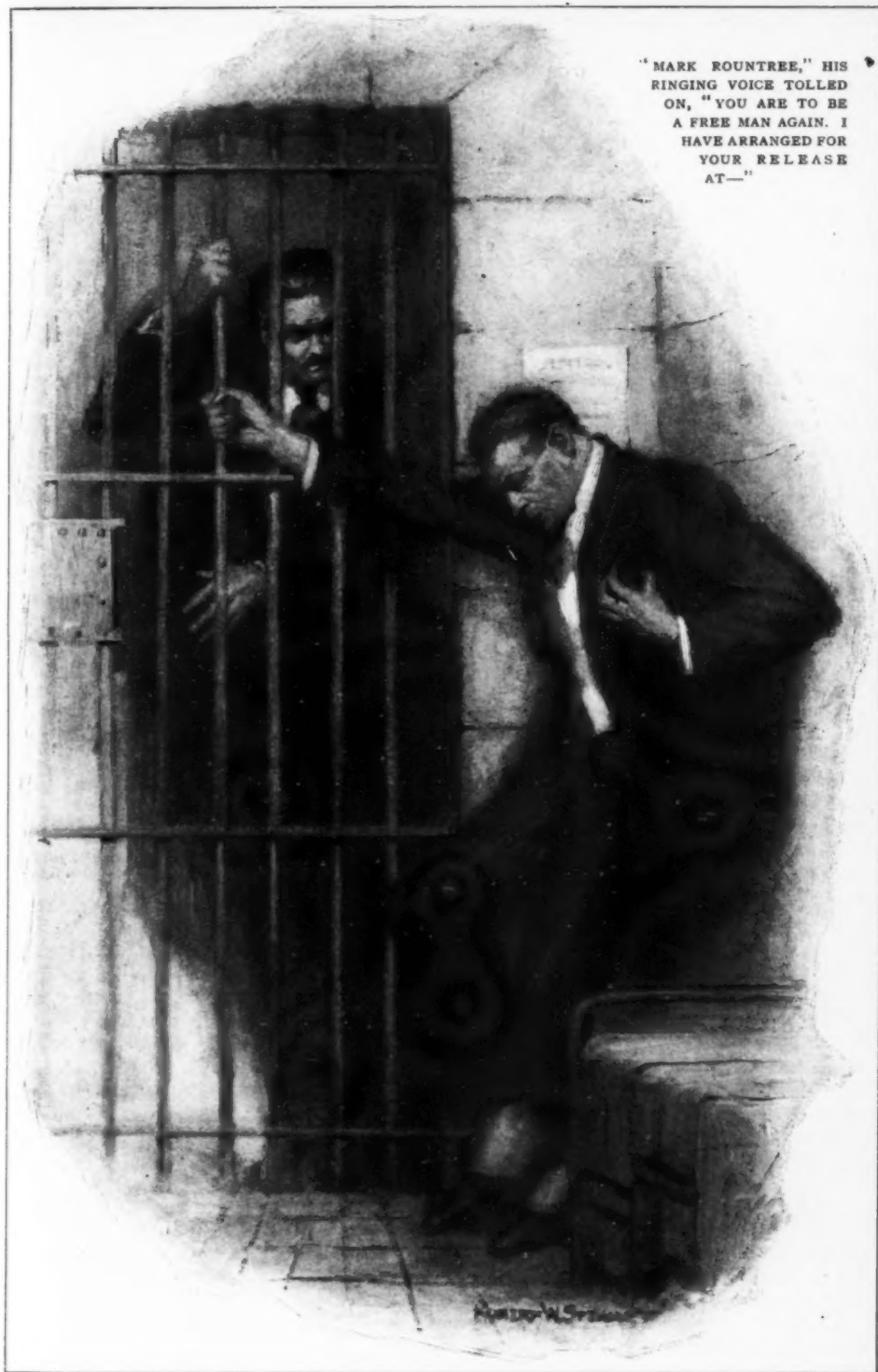
A steel door somewhere near by clanged, abruptly as a pistol-shot. Rountree whirled in his pacing with an animal snarl.

Through the steel bars a face was peering at him—the face of implacable, accusing Justice. Shakily, Rountree staggered to the grille. His big hands seized the bars for support, and he sagged there, staring at his visitor.

"Mark Rountree"—the voice of Portus Judd was deep, solemn, terrible in its gravity—"you must answer my question—



"MARK ROUNTREE," HIS  
RINGING VOICE TOLLED  
ON, "YOU ARE TO BE  
A FREE MAN AGAIN. I  
HAVE ARRANGED FOR  
YOUR RELEASE  
AT—"



what do you know of the killing of Ralph Groper?"

Rountree's lips parted. Two answers—one of them the truth—were struggling for utterance.

The nameless horror of his environment, the terror of the cage and its steel bars, its narrow confines, its nauseating prison odor, drove him toward the truth, breaking his iron will, terrifying him to shout aloud his guilt. Knowledge, experience, the habit of lying, held him back.

"I—I—" Rountree stammered weakly. "I tell you I know—*nothing!*"

The instant the lie was off his lips, fear conquered prudence.

"Listen," he stammered. "Listen to me, I—I—" He must say it. He could lie no longer. "I—" he stammered, "I—"

But Portus Judd was not listening.

"Mark Rountree," his ringing voice tolled on, "you are to be a free man again. The State finds no evidence against you. I have arranged for your release at—"

Judd stopped. Suddenly he shouted loudly for the warden.

"Rountree is ill! He has fainted!" he cried.

## II

MARK ROUNTREE, a few days later, sold a small piece of the acreage he and Groper had bought in partnership. The buyer was a visitor from an Eastern State, a man carried away by the violent enthusiasm of a booming Western city. He paid Rountree's price with a smile, went home to mind his own business, and disappeared from Rountree's life.

Rountree at once wrote to the widow of Ralph Groper. She lived in a small Ohio town. He sent her two thousand dollars and obtained from her, in exchange, a clear title to Groper's share of the investment.

Then for several anxious, lean months, he haunted the hotels in search of other possible purchasers. Eventually he persuaded a number of out-of-town people to visit the bleak, ugly, half-cleared land on the western edge of the rapidly growing city. A born salesman, he sold several plots. He made it a point, at that time, to interest men who would not be likely to bother about their investment for some years—men whose homes and business interests were elsewhere.

Presently Mark Rountree had enough money to carry his plan further. He plotted

the entire acreage, including even the plots he had sold. He put a few laborers at work scratching the ground into some pretense of graded streets. Others began laying wafers of cement paving, which the first winter would crack into makeshift stepping-stones.

He rented a small suite of offices and bought liberally of newspaper advertising space. Early in the spring his first broadsides appeared, full-page displays blazoned with startling phrases set in the largest type.

He announced a contest to choose a name for his addition. It was christened Gem City, and for prizes he gave away a dozen lots. He offered to build homes free for the first fifty bona-fide residents of Gem City, and four hundred lots were taken up in five days. He organized special Sunday picnics with bands and dancing and free car-fare.

Lots were offered at ridiculously low figures. Fifty dollars would buy—according to the advertising bait—some of the choicest, and only three hundred dollars more would build a handsome bungalow. When buyers appeared, they always found that these bargain offerings had "just been sold"; but few escaped without signing one of Rountree's instalment contracts for a house and lot.

Ten dollars down, five dollars down, even a dollar, would start the payments. Most of the purchasers were working men and their wives, many of them ignorant foreigners. Sad-eyed, horny-fisted, overawed dupes they were, who struggled eternally in the toils of Rountree's clever-usury.

Rountree's deeds really were worthless, and he did not scruple to sell the same lots over and over. He bought additional cheap acreage, spent more money for advertising, hired brass bands, and created a considerable city of ugly, jerry-built cottages.

Rountree was growing rich. In no time at all he was rated the heaviest depositor at his bank. Then, one day, two women were ushered into his office.

The elder of his visitors was dressed in black. She was nervous with embarrassment. For her Rountree had but a glance; but his eyes could not leave her companion, a tall, statuesque young woman, attired in a plain tailored suit. She smiled at him, a friendly, frank smile.

Mark Rountree hurriedly removed the derby hat from the back of his massive head and rose heavily to his feet. His great hand swept them toward two chairs.

"Ladies," he invited with his richest smile, "what can I do for you?"

"I am Mrs. Groper—Ralph's wife," said the older woman. "This is my daughter Clara."

Stricken mute, Rountree nodded. From habit his lips continued to smile, but the soul of the man had scuttled to a dark hiding-place, as a spider scuttles when one touches its web.

"We—we sold out in Faversham, back in Ohio." The mother fumbled nervously at her gloves and continued to smile politely, hopefully. "We've heard so much about the West, about Clakamas and its marvelous growth, that we wanted to come, to make our home here. We thought there would be a better opportunity for Clara. She has a splendid business-college education. We did not wish to intrude on you, Mr. Rountree; we know how busy you are," she finished in an embarrassed manner.

"Not at all," said Rountree mechanically. He could not take his hungry stare from Clara. "Not at all, Mrs. Groper."

"In confidence, Mr. Rountree, our money is limited. I am anxious to see Clara started, so we came directly to you. As dear Ralph's friend, as his partner—Of course we know we have no claim—"

In the mental chaos caused by the nearness of Clara, the splendid young woman who had just come into his life, Rountree was conscious of a feeling of relief at the widow's last statement. Claims were ugly things, especially if some sharp lawyer chose to investigate his settlement with her.

"Miss Clara," he said abruptly—"I know you'll let me call you that, as your father's old friend—suppose you tell me about yourself, and what experience you've had?"

In a deep contralto voice that seemed to caress the words, Clara told him of her previous business connections.

"Excellent!" murmured Rountree, rousing from the thrilling bewilderment her voice had caused. "Mrs. Groper, I feel that it is my sacred duty to help you both. I will see what can be done. I am certain that in a brief time something will offer. I will see to it; be assured of that. And, with your permission, I will take the pleasure of calling to-night to pay my respects to you."

Rountree escorted the women to the outer door of his suite. Then, again alone in his office, he stood stupefied by his sudden passion. His brain was in a tumult.

Voices seemed to shout at his ears; hot blood coursed to his brain.

"Mine!" something within him shouted. "She's mine! I must get her; I'll find a way. Find a way? Nonsense! She's mine—I'll take her!"

Slowly raising both clenched fists he cried aloud:

"And to think I nearly spoiled it all; I nearly told that straw man, Portus Judd, everything! What an escape!"

### III

CLARA GROPER and her mother were lodged in a comfortable family hotel in the residential section—a large, rambling old structure with pretenses to fashion, the temporary home of dozens of business adventurers who were founding their fortunes in the new city. Mark Rountree waited in the ladies' parlor, where a number of men and women were lounging and talking after dinner. He felt a little uneasy in the company of these people who "dressed" for the evening. The women's voices, the frequent bursts of laughter, the faint odor of perfume, and the rustle of dresses constituted an environment strange to him.

Rountree had lived apart from women. He avoided them as an entanglement dangerous to a man's success.

To-night he was dressed in the attire he wore for the real-estate picnics—a sweeping Prince Albert, pearl-gray trousers, black, glistening, square-toed shoes, pearl-gray gloves, and an ornate black silk hat.

He was sure of his plans now. His determination to take Clara Groper for his own was like tempered steel in strength. Already he had discharged his cashier in order to make a place for her.

His questing eyes caught sight of the two women across the lobby. Beautiful by day, Clara Groper, in a simple frock of golden hue, was a golden goddess at night. He rose clumsily to greet them.

"Oh, Mr. Rountree," Clara exclaimed, "I have had such good luck! Not in your city a day, and already I've had a good offer. Isn't that splendid?"

"We're so glad you came," murmured the mother, "because I think we should consult you about it."

"An offer! Of a position, you mean?" Rountree could not keep a little surprise from his voice.

"A Mr. Elliott, who is staying here," Clara said. "He is also in real estate."

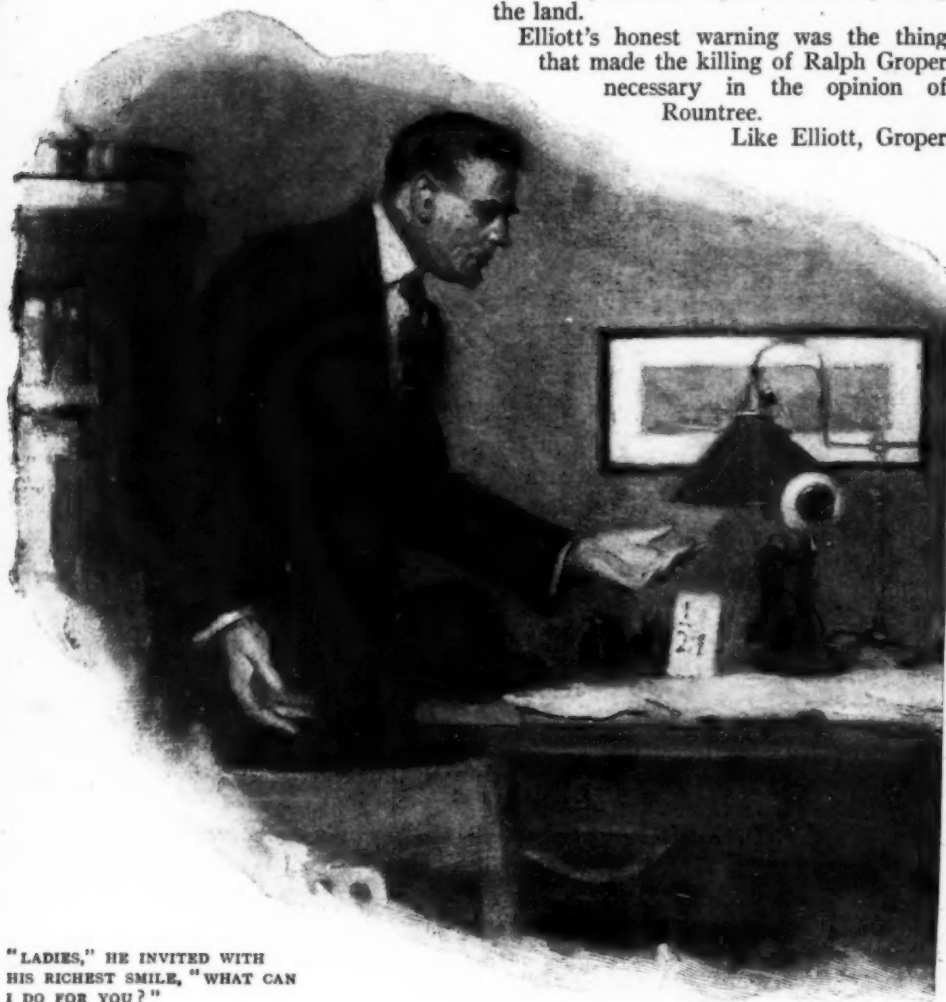
"John Elliott?" asked Rountree.

"Yes. You know him? He learned that I was trained in business and looking for a position, so this evening he introduced himself to us. He needs a cashier, and he has

It was Elliott who had sold Rountree and Groper the suburban acreage that had become Gem City. In making that sale he had frankly pointed out the defects in the title, which he insisted the purchasers would be in duty bound to quiet before exploiting the land.

Elliott's honest warning was the thing that made the killing of Ralph Groper necessary in the opinion of Rountree.

Like Elliott, Groper



"LADIES," HE INVITED WITH HIS RICHEST SMILE, "WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?"

offered me a really splendid chance. Isn't it wonderful?"

"But, my dear Clara, it's not settled!" cried her mother. "We must ask Mr. Rountree's opinion. Perhaps he can tell us about Mr. Elliott."

Rountree collected his wits. He knew John Elliott. Elliott was a younger man—about Clara's age, he realized with a sudden pang—a man whose strict ideas of business honesty annoyed Rountree.

had been bothered by old-fashioned business honesty. That had caused his quarrel with his unscrupulous partner. It seemed entirely logical to Rountree to blame and hate John Elliott as the man who had driven him to murder.

"Yes, I know young Elliott," he said.

He paused to let the non-committal remark sink in. Shrewdly he saw that Clara's mother was his ally.

"I must confess that I am disappointed,



Miss Clara," he continued presently. "I came here to-night prepared to make you an offer. My own cashier is leaving me, and I had hoped to make the position attractive to you."

"There, Clara, I told you so!" Mrs. Groper exclaimed.

Mark Rountree detected an undertone of disappointment in Clara's protestation of thanks. He turned to Mrs. Groper, and, depending upon innuendo to work its slanderous purpose intimated that John Elliott's

women fit for responsible business positions; he was annoyed, because he had counted on Clara's inexperience as a means to claim her gratitude.

He became secretly a little afraid of her. He realized with a shock that to possess the woman he desired so fiercely he must make her his wife.

Mark Rountree became the patron of a fashionable tailor and an exclusive haberdasher. By spending money liberally he assumed the outward appearance of a gentleman. He conceded that much as necessary to accomplish his purpose. He had been brought to this realization because Clara had made a number of friends of her own age. Chiefly favored among the several men was John Elliott. Elliott was handsome and young, and successful in his business of buying and selling real estate. By no means, though, was he as powerful as his unscrupulous rival.

Elliott took Clara Groper to dances and evening parties. Rountree, who abominated dancing, and still felt uneasy in the presence of people accustomed to pleasure, leased a box in the best theater and entertained weekly, with Clara and her mother always the guests of honor.

Rountree, early in his flamboyant advertising campaign, had bought an automobile, then something of a novelty, and had had it painted a brilliant red, with his name and business conspicuously displayed on its side. This he now replaced by an expensive limousine, driven by a chauffeur in livery.

When he found that Clara went canoeing with Elliott on the lake which makes Clakamas famous as a pleasure city, he arranged for the purchase of a small but costly yacht.



"I AM MRS. GROPER—RALPH'S WIFE,"  
SAID THE OLDER WOMAN. "THIS IS MY  
DAUGHTER CLARA"

employ was not the best thing for her daughter.

#### IV

IN a week Clara Groper had been installed in the cashier's cage in his office. Rountree required slight excuse to quit his own room in order to look upon her.

It surprised and annoyed him to discover that Clara Groper was unusually competent. He was surprised, because he never thought

But, spend as he would and try as he would, Mark Rountree saw that he was making slow progress with Clara. Desire obsessed him. Impatience drove him into fits of murderous fury against every person who claimed the girl's attention. He came to look upon Elliott in particular as the man

who barred his path. Mark Rountree was not used to tolerating any one who stood between him and what he wanted.

Clara and her mother lived in a pleasant little cottage set on a hill. There was a side porch commanding a panorama of lake and mountains. Calling one night, Rountree paused at the sound of a voice. Elliott was speaking to Clara.

"He had no more to do with it than I have," Elliott was saying warmly. "It was a case where the stupid police had to make an arrest. They took him because he was most convenient. Afterward the prosecuting attorney apologized. It was—"

"Good evening," said Rountree gravely.

The two surveyed him in momentary embarrassment. He knew they had been discussing the murder of Ralph Groper and his connection with the affair. The incident set him thinking.

Secretly Rountree had arranged for the construction of the home where he planned to install Clara. The site was one of the choicest in the new city. A famous Eastern architect had done his best to bring to realization Rountree's ideas of luxury.

A few days after the incident on the porch, the plans and drawings were brought to him for approval. In the fading light of a languorous fall evening, he unfolded them across his big desk. Practical man that he was, cynical in his outlook, ruthless in his determination, Mark Rountree dreamed a little over the sketch of the first home he would know. There may have been a little something besides the desire to see a radiant woman clad in a manner that would advertise his wealth, queening the awed guests he pictured as thronging the elaborate corridors and rooms in that future mansion. There may have been a little of the wistful desire of a man who has always fought to own one place in the world, one



HE DECLARED HE HAD SEEN GROPER FALL AND ELLIOTT  
EMERGE FROM THE BRUSH, WITH THE SMOKING  
RIFLE, TO PAY HIM BLOOD-MONEY

small corner, where there is nothing but peace and love.

The vision of Clara Groper spread across his brain until it obliterated all else and inflamed his quick imagination. Vivid desire to possess her, to know that she was his without further delay, drove away all caution. He sprang to his feet and rolled up the plans.

"I'll show them!" he growled. "Tonight I'll show them both what I'm going to do for the woman who is to be my wife. Damn this waiting! She's meant for me, and I'm going to take her!"

With bitter fury he ordered his chauffeur to a wild disregard of speed laws. As his big car streaked toward the cottage, his passion grew.

The plans under his arm, he crossed the little walk to the front door, breathing heavily, as if he had run all the way.

Mrs. Groper answered his imperious ring at the door-bell. She appeared frightened, and her eyes showed traces of tears.

Then Clara swept into the little reception-hall; more radiant, more desirable than ever he had seen her, a flush in her creamy cheeks, a glad light in her eye.

"The very man we wanted to see!" she cried. "You're the very first I want to know it. John—Mr. Elliott—and I are announcing our engagement. We are going to be married this fall."

## V

AFTER what seemed an interminable time, during which he forced himself to lie and smile, Rountree escaped the house. He was driven back to his office.

Before his desk he paused, the plans in his hand, scowling vaguely at them. A sudden realization of their mockery brought an inarticulate cry to his lips that was part pain and part rage. Abruptly he seized the scroll and ripped it across.

Face white, teeth bared, eyes distended in a savage glare, he stared at the work of his hands for a long moment. Then convulsively he shook his great shoulders, tossed his head, and, opening a drawer of the desk, laid the torn plans carefully away. His mouth had set in a hard, grim line and his eyes were brooding.

He remained hours at the desk, sometimes nodding slowly to his own thoughts, and when he rose he smiled cruelly.

In a city so self-centered, so engrossed in to-day's events and awed by the marvel of

its own rapid growth, such a murder as that of Ralph Groper was quickly forgotten. In Clakamas the things of two years ago were history more ancient than the days of Rome. When one night a newspaper published a despatch from the State penitentiary saying that the confession of a convict had thrown new light on the Groper killing, and the city police were soon to make an arrest, few readers could accurately recall the case.

But the arrest of John Elliott, which followed next day, on a charge of having committed the murder so long forgotten, was a sensation.

It appeared that the convict's story directly incriminated Elliott. Further, the man's information led to the finding of a rusted rifle concealed in brush in a part of the Gem City tract still uncleared.

John Elliott, accused in this startling way, had no statement to make. He was too dumfounded to talk. When he was called upon to account for his movements on a certain day two years past, a day no different to him from other days, he was puzzled to recall the facts.

Political influence—Mark Rountree could have explained it had he cared to—moved Portus Judd, the prosecutor, to hasten Elliott's trial; and six weeks later the case was called.

The State's chief witness, the convict whose confession had reopened the case, testified that he had been hired by Elliott to lure Groper to that lonely spot. He declared he had seen Groper fall and Elliott emerge from the brush, with the smoking rifle, to pay him blood-money.

John Elliott's defense was an alibi. He had been engaged on that day and hour in another part of the city, selling a lot to a customer; but the customer was a stranger and could not now be located. Other men had seen Elliott, were quite certain about it, but under examination they proved unable to tell definitely of their own movements, even within a week of the day of the murder. They were honest, but after two years busy men forget the details of everyday business, and no amount of honesty can repair faulty memory.

Mark Rountree was a witness for the State. His part in the trial was connected with the prosecutor's attempt to prove a motive. Rountree testified that he had been present at several stormy interviews between Elliott and Groper when the title of the acreage was under discussion. Even Elliott

had to acknowledge that Rountree's statements were correct.

During those terrible weeks preceding and during the trial, Clara Groper had never for a moment wavered in her loyalty to the man she loved. Nor had she let her private grief interfere with business. Daily she did the work Mark Rountree paid her to do; pale and sad-eyed, but competent.

Rountree returned to his office at about one o'clock on the closing day of the trial. He had spent the morning on the witness-stand under cross-examination. He had come out of the ordeal with flying colors.

Court attendants, accustomed to judging cases by their years of experience, had assured Rountree that things looked black for Elliott. After leaving the stand, Rountree had eaten a good lunch, and he returned to business well satisfied with the world.

Entering the building where his office was, he thought of the plans in his desk drawer, the torn plans for his home. He smiled confidently. Clara would be his, and very soon!

In the corridor a janitor was cleaning the floor, pushing with his long-handled brush an accumulation of sawdust soaked with a carbolized disinfectant. Rountree stepped past him, frowning angrily.

"I wish you wouldn't use that infernal stuff up here," he snapped. "The smell of it makes me sick!"

"Superintendent's orders, sir," declared the man.

"Orders be damned!" snarled Rountree. "You tell the superintendent I don't like it, and see that you cut it out."

He pushed open the door of his outer office, and long-continued habit turned his eyes instantly to the cashier's cage. Clara was not there. Several of his humble investors waited in a straggling line before the vacant wicket.

"Where's Miss Groper?" Rountree demanded of a clerk.

"She went out to lunch at twelve, Mr. Rountree," the young man began eagerly. "Ought to be back any minute now."

"Well, look here, what d'you mean letting these people wait like this?" roared Rountree. "Hasn't anybody here got sense enough to take their money and give them a receipt?"

"Why, I never thought—" began the startled employee.

"No, and you'll never have a chance to think for me—never again!" cried Roun-

tree. "You quit the end of this week. No, never mind"—as the clerk started for the cashier's cage—"I'll take it myself."

Rountree pushed behind the counter and pulled open the door to the griled cage.

He collected his usury from the anxious line of clients and scrawled their receipts, joking boisterously with each one of them. Despite his rudeness to his underlings, he was in high spirits. He was on the brink of realizing his greatest desire.

The last of the clients had gone when the cage door opened and a clerk—the clerk whom he had discharged—pushed in timidly and laid a letter before him.

"A messenger boy just brought this," he apologized.

Rountree ripped open the envelope and tumbled out the enclosure, a brief note in the hand of Clara Groper:

DEAR MR. ROUNTREE:

I'm truly sorry to inconvenience you with such abrupt notice, but I have done what I think is right. I believe implicitly in John Elliott's innocence of the murder of my father, and this noon, at the jail, I proved my belief to all the world by becoming his wife.

CLARA GROPER ELLIOTT.

P. S.—I'll be back to-morrow to straighten up my work.

Mark Rountree's great fist twisted the letter into a thin, hard roll. He turned from the wicket, brushing against the waiting clerk. Fixing the underling with an unseeing eye, he pushed past him, mumbling: "Get out of my way, you yellow dog!"

The insult was not consciously spoken. Mark Rountree moved and breathed, but the part of him that realized life—that strange thing called consciousness—had shriveled in the fire that blazed in his brain. He lived, but as a man in a trance.

Mechanically he paced to the end of the cage until steel bars stopped his path. Automatically he turned around and paced back again until the grille of steel at the other end of the cage confronted him. Back and forth he paced, steel barring his way on all sides.

The outer office door opened, and there drifted to his nostrils the sweetish, sickening pungency of a carbolized disinfectant. He trembled with nausea.

A steel door close by, slammed by the hand of the angry clerk, clanged abruptly as a pistol-shot. Rountree whirled in his pacing with an animal snarl.

Through the steel bars a face was peering at him—the face of implacable, accusing



Justice—the leonine head of Portus Judd, the prosecutor. Shakily, Rountree staggered to the grille; his big hands seized the bars for support.

"Mark Rountree!" the solemn voice of Portus Judd tolled like a bell. His oratorical tone, dramatic on the most trivial occasions, caused all the near-by clerks to stop their work and listen. "Mark Rountree, I must call on you again this afternoon to tell what you know of the killing of Ralph Groper."

Rountree's curious clerks craned their heads to listen.

Rountree's lips parted. His dazed mind had bridged a gap of two years. Two answers struggled for utterance—one of them the truth. Huskily he formed the words:

"I—I—I killed Ralph Groper. That is God's truth!"

"Help, here, some of you men, quick!" Portus Judd shouted. "Mr. Rountree is ill—he has fainted!"

Mark Rountree was dead.

## The Sea Bride\*

THE ROMANCE OF AN EVENTFUL WHALING-CRUISE

By Ben Ames Williams

Author of "The Murder Ship," "Swords of Wax," "Three in a Thousand," etc.

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

WHEN Faith Kilcup married Cap'n Noll Wing, an old master whaler, there was considerable misgiving on the part of her relatives and friends. On board the Sally Sims, bound for the South Sea whaling-grounds, Dan'l Tobey, second mate, saw that Noll was losing his grip, and tried in vain to win Faith away from her husband. In a drunken rage Noll kicked out the eye of a ratlike little man named Mauger, and thereafter the captain lived in deadly fear of assassination.

When the Sally Sims put in to a lonely island for fresh water, Faith strolled inland, and, beside a deep pool, met a sailor named Brander, who had been unjustly forced to leave his ship, and was living a Crusoe-like existence. His education and likable manner won Faith's sympathy, and she procured him a berth aboard the Sally, where he quickly became the dominant figure among the crew. The new man excited Cap'n Wing's fear and Dan'l Tobey's animosity, but when the first mate was killed by a whale, Brander, because of his outstanding ability, was made fourth mate.

When a dead whale was sighted on a becalmed sea, Brander suggested that the carcass, which exuded an almost unbearable stench, might contain ambergris. He was scoffed at. Tobey, however, ordered him to take a boat crew and tow the carcass away, which he did—and came back with an almost unbelievable quantity of ambergris, nearly three hundred pounds.

"And worth three hundred dollars a pound!" cackled one-eyed Mauger, who had been one of Brander's crew.

### XVII

BRANDER'S find of ambergris, laid carefully upon the deck, studied by Noll Wing and the officers on their knees, set the Sally buzzing with the clack of tongues.

There was a romance in the stuff itself that caught attention. It came from the rotting carcass of the largest thing that lives—from the heart of a vast stench; yet itself smelled faintly and fragrantly of musk, and had the power of multiplying any other perfume a thousandfold. Not

a man on the Sally had seen a bit larger than a cartridge before; they studied it, handled it, marveled at it.

At last Cap'n Wing stood up stiffly from bending over the lumps of ambergris. He looked at Brander.

"It's ugly enough," he said. "You're sure it's the stuff you think?"

Brander nodded.

"Yes, sir, quite sure."

"What's it worth?"

"Hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars a pound—price changes."

Noll looked at the waxy stuff again.

\* Copyright, 1919, by Ben Ames Williams—This story began in the March number of MURPHY'S MAGAZINE



THERE WAS BETWEEN THEM AN UNSPOKEN CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE; AN UNSPOKEN AGREEMENT THAT HELD THEM APART

"It don't look it. How much is there of it?"

"Close to three hundred pounds."

Noll's lips moved with the computation. He said, in a voice that was hushed in spite of himself:

"Close to ninety thousand dollars!"

Brander smiled.

"That's the maximum, of course."

"You've done the rest of us a service, Mr. Brander," Dan'l Tobey said.

Brander looked at him, and an imp of mischief gleamed in his eye.

"The rest of you?" he echoed quietly.

"I was sent out to remove the carcass, not to dissect it. The digging for this was my private enterprise, Mr. Tobey."

Old James Tichel, the second mate, gasped under his breath. Dan'l started to speak, then looked to Noll. They all looked toward Cap'n Noll Wing. It was for him to deal with Brander's claim. Noll stared at the precious stuff on the deck, and at Brander, and he said nothing.

Brander smiled. He called Mauger to come aft and help him, and proceeded with the utmost care to clean the lumps of ambergris. He paid no further heed to the men about him. Noll went below; and Faith, who had listened without speaking, followed him. Dan'l and old Tichel got together by the after rail and talked in whispers. Willis Cox, the third mate, stood watching. The young man's eyes were wide and his cheeks were white. These seven ugly chunks that resembled hard, dirty-yellow soap were worth more than the whole cruise of the Sally might be expected to pay. They caught Willis's imagination; he could not take his eyes from them.

Brander had Mauger fetch whale-oil; he washed the ambergris in this as tenderly as a mother bathes a child. The black disappeared; it became an even, dull yellow. Here and there, bits of white stuff like bones showed—bits of the bones of the gigantic squid on which the cachalot feeds. The faint, persistent odor spread.

When the cleaning was done, Mauger fetched steelyards and they weighed the lumps, slinging each with care. The larger ones were so heavy that they had to make the scales fast to the rigging. The largest weighed seventy-four pounds and a fraction; the next was sixty-one; the third, forty-eight. The four smaller lumps weighed together, tipped the beam at nine-

teen pounds. The seven totaled two hundred and two pounds.

Mauger was disappointed at that.

"I took 'em to weigh three hundred any ways," he complained.

Brander looked at Willis.

"Two hundred isn't to be laughed at; eh, Mr. Cox?"

"That must be the biggest find of ambergris ever was," Willis said hoarsely.

Brander shook his head.

"The Watchman, out o' Nantucket, brought home eight hundred pounds back in '58. I've heard so, at least."

Willis had nothing to say to that; he went aft to join Tichel and Dan'l Tobey and tell them the weight of the stuff.

Brander sent for Eph Hitch, the cooper, and showed him the ambergris.

"Fix me a cask," he said, "big enough to hold all that. We'll stow it dry."

Eph scratched his head. He spat over the rail.

"Fix *you* up a cask?" he repeated. "Oh, aye!" He emphasized the pronoun; and Brander's eyes twinkled.

They packed the ambergris away in the captain's storeroom, a compartment at the bottom of the Sally, under the cabin, in the very stern. It rested there among the barrels and casks of food and the general supplies. There was no access to this place save through the cabin itself; it was not connected with the after hold, where water and stores and gear were stowed away. Brander suggested putting it there; he came to Noll Wing with his request, and because Dan'l Tobey was with Noll, Brander framed his question in a personal form.

"I'd like to stow this below us here," he said. "Best it be out of reach of the men."

Dan'l scowled; Noll looked up heavily, met Brander's eyes. In the end, he nodded.

"Where you like," he said sulkily. "Don't bother me."

Brander smiled; and the cask was hidden away below.

But it was not forgotten; it could not be forgotten. From its hiding-place, the ambergris made its influence felt all over the vessel. It was like dynamite in its potentialities for mischief. The mates could not forget it; the boat-steerers in the steerage discussed it over and over; the men in the fo'c's'le argued about it endlessly.

It was a rich treasure, worth as much as the whole cruise was like to be worth in oil; and it was all in seven lumps. That is to say, it was no more than a heavy burden for a strong man. Two men could have carried it easily.

Great value in small compass sets men by the ears. Every man aboard the Sally had a direct and personal interest in Brander's find of ambergris. And the matter of their debate was this—was the ambergris the property of the Sally, a fruit of the voyage, or was it Brander's? If it was a part of the profits of the cruise they would all share in it. If it was Brander's, they would not.

Brander—and this word had gone around the ship—had spoken of it as his own. For which some condemned and hated him; some praised and chose to flatter him. If the worth of the stuff was divided between them all, Noll Wing and Dan'l Tobey would have the lion's share, and the men forward would have no more than the price of a debauch. If it were Brander's alone, they might beg or steal a larger share from him. Or—and not a few had this thought—they might seize the whole treasure and make off with it.

The possibilities were infinite; the chances for trouble enormous.

This new tension aboard the Sally came to a head in the cabin; the very air there was charged with it. Dan'l and old Tichel were against Brander from the first; Cox was inclined to support him. Dan'l sought to sound Noll Wing and learn his attitude. He said to Noll casually, one day:

"The 'gris will make this a fat cruise, sir."

Noll nodded.

"Oh, aye—no doubt!"

Dan'l looked away.

"Of course, Brander doesn't intend to claim it all."

"Ye think not?" Noll asked anxiously.

"No," said Dan'l. "He knows he can't. It's a part of the takings of the Sally."

Noll wagged his head dolefully.

"Aye, but will the man see it that way?"

"He'll have to."

The captain looked up at Dan'l cautiously.

"Did you mark the greed in the one eye of Mauger when they came aboard?" he asked. "Mauger sets store by the stuff."

Dan'l snorted.

"Mauger! Pshaw!"

Noll shifted uneasily in his chair.

"Just the same," he said, "Mauger holds a grudge against me. He but waits his chance for a knife in my back. And Brander is his friend, you'll mind."

"You're not afraid of the two of them. There's no need. I'll undertake to see to that."

"You're a strong man, Dan'l," said old Noll. "A strong, youthful man. But I'm getting old. Eh, Dan'l"—his voice broke with his pity of himself—"eh, Dan'l, I've sailed the sea too long."

Dan'l said, with some scorn in his tone:

"Nevertheless, you're not afraid—"

Faith opened the door from the after cabin just then and Dan'l checked his word. Faith looked from Dan'l to her husband, and her eyes hardened as she looked to Dan'l again.

"You'll not be saying Noll Wing is afraid of—anything, Dan'l," she said mildly.

"I'm telling him," said Dan'l, "that he should not permit Brander to claim the ambergris for himself."

Faith smiled a little.

"You think Brander means to do that?"

"He has done it," said Dan'l stubbornly. "He claimed it in the beginning; he speaks of what he will do with it. He speaks of it as his own."

"I think," said Faith, "that something has robbed you of discernment, Dan'l. Why do you hate Brander? Is he not a good officer, a man?"

Dan'l might have spoken, but Brander himself dropped down the ladder from the deck just then; and Dan'l stood silently for a moment, watching.

Brander looked at Faith, and spoke to her and to the others. Then he went into the cabin that he shared with Willis Cox, and closed the door. They all knew the thinness of the cabin walls; what they might say Brander could hear distinctly. Dan'l turned without a word and went on deck.

He met Tichel there, and told him what had passed. Tichel grinned angrily.

"Aye," said the old man. "Brander comes and Jonahs us, so we sight no whale for a month on end, and then he's wishful to hold the prize that the Sally's boat found!" His teeth set, his fist rose.

Dan'l nodded his agreement.

"We'll see that he does not, in the end," he said.



"Aye," said Tichel. "Aye, we'll see t' that!"

Roy Kilcup was a partizan of Dan'l, in this as in all things; and Roy alone faced Brander on the matter. He asked the fourth mate straightforwardly:

"Look here, do you claim that ambergris is yours?"

Thus they were all perturbed; but Noll Wing took the matter harder than any, because Mauger, whom he feared, was concerned in it. His worry over it gave him one sleepless night; he rose and found the whisky. And for the first time in all his life, Noll Wing drank himself into a stupor.

He had always been a steady drinker; he had often been inflamed with liquor. But his stomach was strong; he could carry it; he had never debauched himself. This time he became like a log, and Faith found him when she woke in the morning, sodden and helpless as a snoring log. He lay thus two days. And he woke at last with a



"GOD'S SAKE, FAITH, QUIT FUSSING OVER ME! I GOT ALONG MORE 'N TWENTY YEARS WITHOUT A WOMAN"

Brander smiled at the boy.

"Why, youngster?" he asked.

"Because I want to know," said Roy.

"That's why."

"Well," Brander chuckled, "others want to know. They're not sleeping well of nights, for wanting."

"Do you, or don't you?" Roy insisted.

Brander leaned toward him and whispered amiably:

"I'll tell you the day we touch at home," he promised. "Now, run along!"

scream of fright, and swore that Mauger was at him with a knife, so that Dan'l and Willis Cox had to hold the man quiet till the hallucination passed.

### XVIII

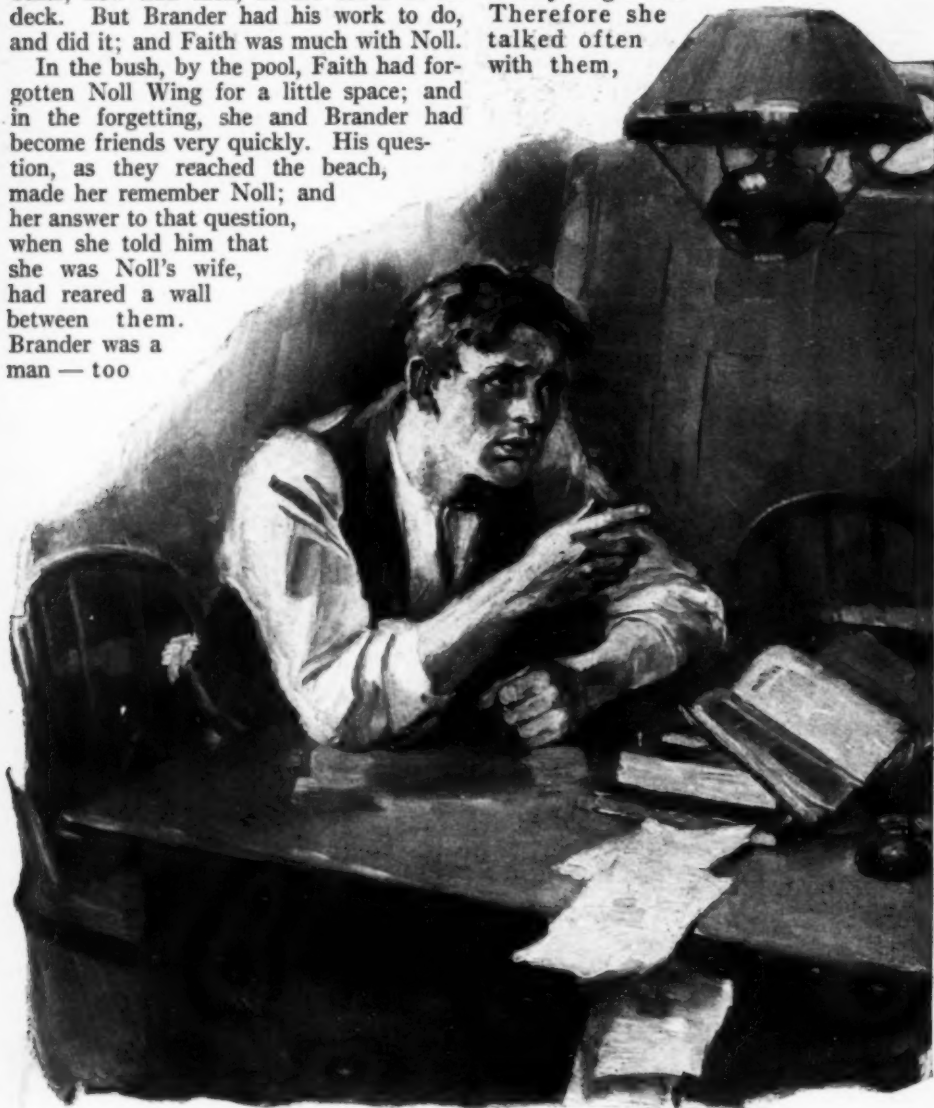
FAITH and Brander had not, in this time, spoken a word alone together since they met Mr. Ham upon the beach after Brander joined Faith by the island pool. In the beginning, Brander was forward, and a gulf separated them—not to mention forty

feet of deck. Faith stayed aft; Brander stayed forward. Afterward, when Brander came into the cabin, there was still a gulf. They met at table; they encountered each other, now and then, in the cabin or on deck. But Brander had his work to do, and did it; and Faith was much with Noll.

In the bush, by the pool, Faith had forgotten Noll Wing for a little space; and in the forgetting, she and Brander had become friends very quickly. His question, as they reached the beach, made her remember Noll; and her answer to that question, when she told him that she was Noll's wife, had reared a wall between them. Brander was a man — too

voyage; she had known two of them—Dan'l and Willis Cox—since they were boys. They were ticketed in her thoughts; they were old friends, but they could never be anything more.

Therefore she talked often with them,



SUDDENLY ROY CRIED IN A LOW VOICE: "FAITH, I KNOW! YOU LOOK AT BRANDER JUST LIKE YOU USED TO LOOK AT NOLL WING WHEN WE WERE KIDS!"

much of a man to forget that she was Noll's wife. He did not forget.

In the Sally, after Brander came aft, Faith was toward him as she was toward the other mates, with this difference—she had known them since the beginning of the

as she did with Tichel, and as she had done with Mr. Ham. She forgot they were men, remembering only that they were friends.

Brander, on the other hand, was a newcomer, a stranger. When a woman meets a strange man, or when a man meets a

strange woman, there is an instant and usually unconscious testing and questioning. This is more lively in the woman than in the man; she is more apt to put it into

Faith, almost unconsciously, avoided Brander. She spoke with him, but there was a bar in her words. She saw him, but her eyes put a wall between them. She thought of him, but she hid her thoughts from herself. Brander felt this, and respected it. There was between them an unspoken conspiracy of silence; an unspoken agreement that held them apart.

This agreement was broken, and broken by Faith, on an afternoon some ten days after the finding of the ambergris. The day was fair; the wind was no more than normal. No whales had yet been sighted by the Sally, and her decks were clear of oil. Mr. Tichel's watch had the ship; but Tichel himself, old man that he was, had stayed below and was asleep in his cabin.

Dan'l was asleep there, also; and Noll Wing dozed in the after cabin. Willis Cox was reading, under the boat-house; and two of the harpooners played idly at some game of cards in the lee of the rail beside him. Brander and the man at the wheel had the after deck to themselves when Faith came up from the cabin.

Roy was with her; but the boy went forward at once and climbed the rigging to the mast-head, to stand watch with the men there. He loved to perch high above the decks, with the sea spread out like a blue saucer below him. He teased Faith to go with him; but Faith shook

her head. There was a certain physical indolence about her that contrasted with the vigor of her habits of thought and speech; she liked to sit quietly and read, or sew, or think; and she cared nothing for such riotous exertion as Roy liked.

"No, Roy," she told her brother. "You go if you like. I'll say down here."

"Come on, sis," he teased. "I guess you're afraid. You never could even climb a tree without squealing. Come on!"



FAITH WENT WHITE. SHE ROSE TO HER FEET SO SWIFTLY THAT THE BOOK WAS OVERTURNED ON THE TABLE

words in her thoughts, more apt to ask herself:

"Could I love him?"

For a man does not ask this question at all until he has begun to love; a woman, consciously or unconsciously, asks it at once. And until this question is answered—until the inner thing that is sex has made decision—a woman is reticent and slow to accept the communion of even casual conversation.

She laughed softly.

"No. I don't like to do hard things—like that."

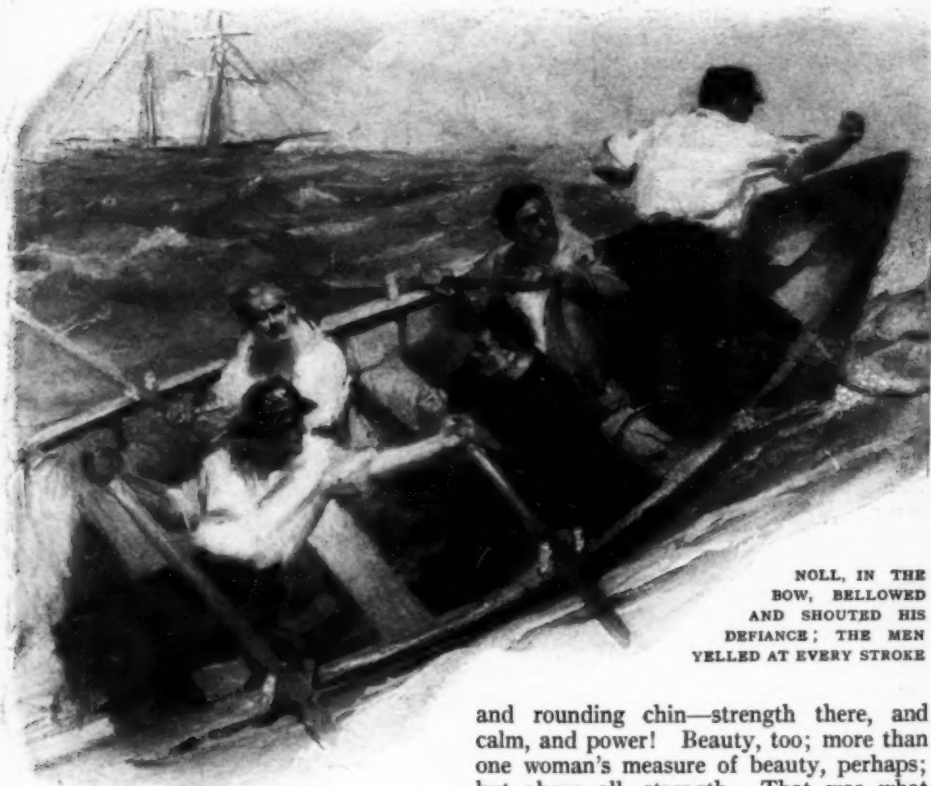
"I won't let you fall," he promised.

"Some day, maybe. Run along, Roy!"

The boy went away resentfully—a little more resentfully because Brander had heard her refusal. He looked back from the fore-rigging, and saw Faith standing near Brander. For a moment he was minded to go back and join them; but the dwin-

he nodded to her. She stood near him, hands on the rail, looking out across the sea astern. The wind tugged at her, played with the soft hair about her brow, whipped her cheeks to fire.

She did not look at Brander, but Brander looked at her. The man liked what he saw; he liked not so much the beauty of her as the strength and poise that lay in her face. Her broad, low brow, her straight, fine nose, her sweetly molded lips,



NOLL, IN THE  
BOW, BELLOWED  
AND SHOUTED HIS  
DEFIANCE; THE MEN  
YELLED AT EVERY STROKE

dling line of the ropes above him lured him on. He climbed, lost himself among the great bosoms of the sails, stopped to ride a yard like a horse and exult when it pitched and rolled. He climbed, at last, to the masthead perch where the lookouts stood in their hoops with their eyes sweeping the wide circle of the seas.

Faith and Brander were together. Save for the man at the wheel, whom neither of them heeded, they were alone. Brander was at the after rail when she appeared;

and rounding chin—strength there, and calm, and power! Beauty, too; more than one woman's measure of beauty, perhaps; but above all, strength. That was what Brander saw.

It was no new thing for the man to study Faith's countenance. It was firm-fastened in his thoughts; he could conjure it up at will, and it appeared before him, many times, without his volition. Faith's eyes were blue, and they were large, and Brander could never forget them. The eye of a man or of a woman is a thing almost alive; it seems to have a soul of its own. Stand at one side, unobserved, and watch the eyes of your friend; you will feel that you are watching some living personality apart from the friend you know. It is like



spying on a wild thing which is hiding in the forest. The eye is so alert, so quick to swing to right or left at any sound.

Woman's eyes differ as much as women themselves. Faith's eyes were like Faith

"I never felt just that," she said. "But did you ever look at a hill, so far away it is just a deep blue shape against the sky? Blue's a beautiful color to look at, I think."

He nodded.



AT NOON THE  
VAST BEAST WAS  
STILL FIGHTING WITH  
NO SIGN OF WEARINESS

herself; there was no fear or uncertainty in them; and there was no coquettishness, no seduction. They were level and calm and perfectly assured; and Brander thought that to look into them was like taking a strong man's hand. He thought Faith as fine a thing as woman can be.

Brander made sure that Faith did not see him studying her thus; nevertheless, she must have felt his scrutiny. She was conscious of an unaccountable diffidence; and when she spoke to him at last, without looking toward him, her voice was so low he scarcely heard at all. She said some idle thing about the beauty of the sea.

The sky was so clear, and the heavens were so blue, that sky and heaven seemed to be cousins or sisters, their hands clasping at the far horizon.

"I always think," Brander said amiably, "that looking off into the blue on a day like this is like looking deep into blue eyes. There seems to be a soul off there, something hidden, out of sight; but you can feel it looking back at you."

Faith was so surprised that she looked up at him quickly, sidewise; and she smiled, her cheeks a little flushed.

"From my hill," he said, "I used to be able to see an island northwest of the one where I was. Just a line laid down along the sea—a line of blue."

She said nothing in reply to this; and he said no more. They were thus silent for a little before Faith asked:

"Tell me, how did you live there? Wasn't it lonely? Or were there others?"

He laughed.

"I wasn't lonely in the least," he explained. "The old devil-devil doctor of the village struck up an acquaintance with me. He knew whites; and I was the only one there at the time. He used to come and talk to me, and say charms over my garden. I had a little compass on my watch-chain, and I gave it to him, and the old heathen was my slave for life. So I arranged with him to have my path tabu—you remember I told you; and he was the only company I ever had."

"You had a garden?"

"Yes, a good one. I put up a house—just big enough for me, and no more—and I trimmed down some trees. There was a little brook and a shallow basin in the side of the hill where rich soil had been collecting for a good many centuries, I suppose. I think if I had planted pebbles there, it would have grown boulders for me. It did grow all I wanted."

She was thoughtful for a little.

"Why did you ever ship as a whaler?" she asked. "You don't look like the men that ship in the fo'c's'le."

"I know it," he nodded. "Maybe because I like the sea. My home was in sight of it—a high old farm up in Maine, five miles inland. I used to sit out on the hill there and watch the night come up from the east and blanket the water. When there was a surf I could hear it; and when I could, I went down and got acquainted with the water—swimming, or poking around in an old dory. It was bound to get me in the end. My father sent me to school. He wanted me to be a doctor; but after two years of it, I begged off, and he let me go."

She nodded.

"I know—a little—how you feel. I've always loved the smell of the sea at home, and the sight of it. But"—she grimaced harshly—"I'm getting a bit tired of salt water. I want to get ashore!"

"Sure," Brander agreed. "And when you've been a month ashore, you'll be hungry for the sea again. It's like a drug; you get used to it, and you can't do without it."

"Do you think so?"

"I know it. Wait and see."

After a little she spoke of the ill luck that had pursued the Sally.

"Isn't it unusual to go almost six weeks without getting a whale?"

"No, not necessarily," he told her. "You may kill every other day for a year, and not see a fish for three months after. The whales seem to come and go, in some waters."

"These?" she asked.

He nodded.

"It's uncertain here. We're working over now into better hunting-grounds. The Sally's done well thus far anyway—almost a thousand barrels and not out a year. I've heard of ships that came home with empty casks."

She looked at him curiously.

"I think you know more about the work than most men aboard," she said. "Yet you've not had the experience."

"I've picked it up at gams, read it, guessed it," he said pleasantly. "They know more about the practical end than I. I haven't been tried out yet, you know."

She smiled.

"Mr. Tichel says you're a Jonah," she told him. "I think he would be in favor of throwing you overboard."

He laughed cheerfully.

"I hope you're not one," she went on. "I'm anxious that Cap'n Wing should

make a big record on this cruise. It's my first with him, you know."

His eyes were sober, but he said:

"We'll fill the casks, all right. I wouldn't worry."

She looked toward him and said:

"Yes, we will fill them."

There was an immense amount of quiet certainty and determination in her voice. Brander looked at her for an instant, then turned to give some direction to the man at the wheel. The Sally heeled awkwardly to the thrust of the wind and battered at the sea with her blunt bows. The rigging creaked and tugged. Willis Cox, under the boat-house, had dropped his book in his lap and was dozing in his chair; the two harpooners had gone below. Forward, Faith could see two or three men sprawled on the deck, asleep.

The warm afternoon wind seemed slumber laden; the Sally Sims herself was like a ship that walked in her sleep. A hush hung over them all, so that Faith and Brander unconsciously lowered their voices.

"Why is it that you and Mr. Tobey do not like each other?" Faith asked casually.

If he was surprised at the question, Brander did not show it.

"I've no dislike for Mr. Tobey," he said frankly. "He's an able officer. He knows his business."

"He does not like you," Faith said. "Why not?"

Brander smiled.

"It may be," he admitted, "that Mr. Tobey is lacking in a sense of humor. I've a way of laughing at things. Mr. Trant, on the Thomas Morgan, used to curse me for grinning so much of the time. Perhaps Mr. Tobey—"

He did not finish the sentence; he seemed to consider it unnecessary to do so, or unwise.

Faith said nothing. They stood together, eyes off across the water, balancing unconsciously to the motion of the ship. Their shoulders were almost brushing. Brander felt the light contact on his coat; and he moved away a little, inconspicuously.

She turned at last toward the companion; but after one step she stopped and looked back at him.

"I think," she said, "that Mr. Tobey believes you mean to claim that the find of ambergris belongs to you."

"I know he does. There's no harm in puzzling Mr. Tobey."

"There may be harm—for you—in his believing that," she said.

For a moment Brander's level eyes met hers, and she saw a flame in his.

"I'm not particularly concerned," he said quietly.

She bowed her head to hide her eyes; and she went below so quickly that it was as if she fled from him.

### XIX

FAITH had assured herself from the beginning that Brander had no real intention of claiming the ambergris as his personal booty. He was too sensible for that, she felt; and he was not greedy.

She had been sure; but like all women, she wished to be reassured. She had given Brander the chance to reassure her, speaking of the 'gris and of Dan'l Tobey's suspicions in the matter. It would have been so easy for Brander to laugh and say:

"You know I have no such idea. It belongs to the Sally, of course."

That would have settled the thing, once and for all; but Brander had not been frank and forthright.

"There's no harm in puzzling Mr. Tobey," he had said.

And when she had suggested that there might be harm for Brander, his eyes had hardened with something like defiance in them. He remained as much of a puzzle to Faith as ever.

If he had deliberately planned to steal a place in her thoughts, he could have taken no better means. Faith, with her growing sense of responsibility for the Sally, for the success of the voyage, for the good renown of Noll Wing, was acutely concerned when anything threatened that success. The ambergris was properly a part of the Sally's takings. Brander must see it so. Did he mean to push his claim, to make trouble?

She tried to find her answer to this question in Brander's face; she began to study him daily. She perceived the strength of the man, his poise and assurance. Brander was very sure of himself and of his capabilities, without in the least overrating them. He knew himself for a man; he bore himself as a man. Faith respected him; without her realizing it, this respect and liking grew.

Unconsciously Brander was ranked now

and then in her thoughts beside her husband, Noll Wing; she compared the two men without being willing to make the comparison. And in the process, she studied Noll Wing more closely than she had ever studied him before.

It was at this time that she first marked the fact that Noll was shrinking, wasting the flesh from his bones. His skin was becoming loose; it sagged. His great chest was drawing in between his shoulders; his shoulders slumped forward. Also Faith saw, without understanding, that the great cords of his neck were beginning to stand out under the loose skin, that hollows were forming about them. The man's bull neck was melting away. Faith saw, though she did not fully understand; she knew that Noll was aging, nothing more.

She was drawn to Noll, at this discovery, by a vast tenderness; but this tenderness was impersonal. She thought it a recrudescence of her old, strong love for the man; it was in fact only such a feeling as she might have had for a sick or wounded beast. She pitied Noll profoundly; she tried to make him happy and comfortable. She sought, now and then, to woo him to cheerfulness and mirth.

But Noll was shrinking, day by day, into a more confirmed habit of complaint; he whined constantly, where in the old days he would have stormed and commanded. And he resented Faith's attentions, resented her very presence about him. One day she went into the galley and prepared a dish she thought would please him; when she told him what she had done, he exclaimed:

"God's sake, Faith, quit fussing over me! I got along more 'n twenty years without a woman."

Faith would not let herself feel the hurt of this. But even while she watched over Noll, Brander more and more possessed her thoughts. Her recognition of this fact led her to be the more attentive to Noll, as if to recompense him for the thing he was losing. She had never so poured out herself upon him.

It was inevitable that this developing change in Faith should be marked by those in the cabin. Dan'l saw it and Brander saw it. Brander saw it, and at first his pulse leaped and pounded and his eyes shone with his thoughts. On deck, about his duties, he carried the memory of her eyes always with him—her eyes as she had looked at him that day and many days

before—questioning, a little wistful, a little wondering.

But Brander was a strong man; and he put a grip upon himself. He was drawn to Faith; he knew that if he let himself go, he would be caught in a whirlwind of passion for her. But he did not choose to let himself go; and by the same token he took care to have no part in what might be taking place in Faith herself.

He knew that he might have played upon her awakened interest in him; he knew that it would be worth life itself to see more plainly that which he had seen in her eyes; nevertheless, he put the thing away from him. When she was about, he became reticent, curt, abrupt. He took refuge in an arrogance of tone, an absorption in his work. He began to drive his men.

Dan'l Tobey saw. Dan'l had eyes to see; and it was inevitable that he should discover the first hints of change in Faith. For he watched her jealously; and he watched Brander as he had watched him from the beginning.

Dan'l saw Faith and Brander drawing together day by day; and though he hated Brander the more for it, he was content to sit still and wait. He counted upon their working Brander's own destruction between them in the end; and Dan'l was in a destructive mood in those days. He hated the strength of Brander, the loyalty of Faith, the age of old Noll Wing, and the youth of Roy. He was become, through overmuch brooding, a walking vessel of hate; it spilled out of him with every word, keep his voice as amiable as he might. He hated them all!

But he was careful to hide his resentment against Roy. He cultivated the boy, he worked little by little to debase Roy's standards of life, and he looked forward vaguely to a day when he might have use for the lad. Dan'l had no definite plan at this time save to destroy. But for all his absorption in Faith, he had not failed to see that Noll Wing's strength was going out of him. If Noll were to die, Dan'l would be master of the Sally and those aboard her.

Dan'l never lost sight of this possibility; he kept it well in mind; and he laid, little by little, the foundations upon which in that day he might build his strength. Roy was one of these foundations.

Dan'l saw one obstacle in his path, even with Noll gone. The men forward, and some of the under officers, were hotly loyal

to Noll Wing; and by the same token they looked upon Faith with eyes of awed affection. Faith had that in her which commanded the respect of men; and Dan'l knew that the roughest man in the crew would fight to protect Faith, against himself or any other. He never forgot this.

When Roy Kilcup, last of them all, marked Faith's interest in Brander, the boy unwittingly gave Dan'l a chance to strike a blow at the men's trust in the captain's wife.

Roy, though he might quarrel with her most desperately, was at his heart devoted to Faith and wild with his pride in her. He marked a look in her eyes one day; and it disturbed him. Dan'l found the boy on deck, staring out across the water, his eyes clouded with perplexity and doubt.

Roy was aft; there was one of the men at the wheel. Dan'l glanced toward this man—one of his own boat crew, by name Slatter, with a sly eye and a black tongue. Dan'l spoke to him in passing—some command to keep the Sally steady against the pressure of the wind—and stopped beside Roy, dropping his hand on the boy's shoulder.

"Hello, Roy!" he said amiably.

Roy looked up at him, nodded. Dan'l caught a glimpse of the shadow in his eyes and asked in a friendly tone:

"What's wrong? You're worried about something."

Roy shook his head.

"No."

Dan'l laughed.

"Shucks! You can't fool any one with that, Roy. If you don't want to talk—"

Roy hesitated; he studied Dan'l for a moment.

"Dan'l," he said, "you've known Faith and me all our lives. I guess I can talk to you, if I can to anybody; and I've got to talk to somebody, Dan'l."

Dan'l nodded soberly.

"I'm here to be talked to. What's the matter, Roy?"

"Dan'l, have you noticed the way Faith looks at Brander?" the boy asked abruptly.

Dan'l had been half prepared for the question; nevertheless his fingers dug into his palms. He remained silent for a moment, thinking. His thoughts raced. His eyes fell on foul-tongued Slatter at the wheel. There was a piece of luck; an instrument ready to his hand.

Dan'l still hesitated for a space; his



brows twisting. Then the man threw all decency behind him, and flung himself at last into the paths toward which his feet had been tending. He moved to one side, so that Roy, in facing him, must also face the man at the wheel; so that Roy's words would come to Slatter's ears. And Dan'l was very sure that Slatter would take care to hear.

For another moment he did not speak; then he laughed harshly.

"What do you mean, Roy?" he asked.

"I mean the way Faith looks at Brander all the time," Roy repeated.

Dan'l Tobey seemed to be embarrassed; he looked to right and left, and he said huskily:

"Shucks! I guess you've got too much imagination, Roy."

Roy shook his head.

"No, I haven't, either. I've been watching her. She looks at him, and her eyes get kind of misty like; and if you say something to her, sometimes she doesn't hear you at all."

"She's got a right to think," Dan'l chuckled. "You talk too much, anyway, Roy. No wonder she don't listen to you."

His tone was good-natured. Roy fell silent for a moment, studying Dan'l's face; and Dan'l looked confused.

"Dan'l!" Roy said sharply. "Haven't you seen, yourself, what I mean? Haven't you, Dan'l?"

Dan'l turned his head away; he would not meet Roy's eyes.

"I knew you saw it!" Roy cried. "Everybody must see it!"

"Roy, you'd best not see too much," Dan'l said sternly. "It don't pay. There's times when it's wise to see little and say nothing. If it was me, I'd say this was one of the times."

"That's all right," Roy admitted. "But I can talk to you. Dan'l, Noll Wing is too old for Faith. She ought to have married you, Dan'l."

Children have a disconcerting way of sticking a word like a knife into our secret hearts; they see so clearly, and they have not yet learned to pretend they do not see. Roy, for all his eighteen years, was still as much child as man; and Dan'l winced.

"Land, Roy!" he protested. "Get that idea out of your head. Faith and me understand—"

Roy turned his back, looking aft. Dan'l glanced toward Slatter at the wheel. Slat-

ter's back was toward them; but Dan'l could have sworn the man's ears were visibly pricking to miss no word. Dan'l's eyes burned unpleasantly.

A woman's strongest armor is her innocence. If Faith were tarnished in the eyes of the men in the fo'c's'le, she would have few defenders there. The roughest man will honor a good woman; but he looks upon one who is soiled with contemptuous or greedy eyes. Dan'l was willing, for his own ends, that the fo'c's'le should think evil of Faith Wing.

While they stood thus, Brander came on deck, and spoke for a minute with Dan'l, then went slowly forward. Because he and Dan'l clashed so sharply, Brander had fallen into the way of spending much time amidships with the harpooners, or forward with the crew. Dan'l's place was aft. Roy watched Brander as he spoke to the mate, watched him walk away. When Brander was gone, Dan'l looked toward Roy.

"Dan'l," Roy said quietly, "if Brander tries to—do anything to my sister, I'm going to kill him!"

Dan'l said nothing; and Roy moved abruptly past him and went below.

He was not seeking Faith; but he came upon her there, in the main cabin. She was at the table, with a book, and paper and pen. He stopped to look over her shoulder, and saw that she was making calculations—latitude and longitude.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

She looked up at him.

"Studying navigation, Roy. Don't you want to?"

He stared at her.

"What are you doing it for?"

"Because I want to. Besides, it's a good thing to be able to find out where you are on a world as big as this."

He flung himself into a chair across from his sister.

"Look here, Faith, why do you keep looking at Brander all the time?"

Faith was startled; she was startled not so much at what Roy said, as at what his words revealed to her. Nevertheless her voice was steady and quiet as she asked:

"What do you mean, Roy?"

"The way you look at Brander. He's not fit for you to talk to, to look at—anything. He's not fit to be around you."

She laughed at him.

"How do I look at Mr. Brander, Roy?" she asked.

"Why, like—"

Roy groped for words. Faith was suddenly afraid of what he might say. She interrupted him.

"Don't be silly, Roy! Go away. Don't bother me. I'm busy with this, Roy."

"You—" he began.

But she bent over her book; she paid him no attention for a moment. Roy, sitting opposite, studied the top of her head, and thought. There was an expression in his eyes as if he were trying to remember something familiar that evaded him. In the silence, they could hear Cap'n Wing snoring in his cabin; they could hear old Tichel stir in his bunk at the other side of the ship; they could hear the muffled murmur of the voices of the harpooners in the steerage. And all about them the timbers of the Sally creaked and groaned as they yielded to the tug of wind and sea. Roy still stared with a puzzled frown at the top of Faith's brown head. Faith did not look up from her book.

Suddenly Roy cried in a low voice:

"Faith, I know! You look at Brander just like you used to look at Noll Wing when we were kids!"

Faith went white. She rose to her feet so swiftly that the book was overturned on the table, the loose sheets of paper fluttered, the pen rolled across to the edge of the table and fell and stuck on its point in the cabin floor.

With a motion swift as light, forgetting book and paper and pen, she slipped across into the after cabin. She shut the door in Roy's face, and he heard her slip the catch upon it.

Roy stared at the closed door; then he went abstractedly around the table and pulled the pen loose from the floor. The steel point was twisted, spoiled.

## XX

THE Sally came abruptly into a sea that was full of whales. At nightfall they had not smelled oil for weeks; at dawn there were spouts on three quarters of the horizon; and thereafter for more than a month there were never three successive days when they did not sight whales.

This turn of the luck brought three things to pass—Roy Kilcup had his first chance in the boats during the chase; Brander killed his first whale as an officer of the Sally; and Noll Wing killed the last cachalot that was ever to feel his lance.

Dan'l Tobey had promised Roy, at the time when Brander was promoted to be mate, that he would give the boy a chance in his boat. He put Roy on the after thwart, under his own eye, and Roy leaned to the oar and pulled with all his might, and bit his lip to hold back the sobbing of his breath. The boy came of whaling stock; his father and his father's father had been men of the sea. He did not turn white when the boat's bow slid at last alongside a slumbering black mass, and the keen harpoons chocked home.

That first experience of Roy's was a mild one. The whale, a fairish bull, showed no fight whatever. He took the irons as a baby takes soothing-sirup; and he lay still while they pulled alongside and prodded him with a lance. At the last, when his spout was a crimson fountain, he gave one gigantic forward leap; but he was dead not ten fathoms from the spot where he lay when the first harpoon went home. Thereafter there was only the long toil of towing the monster back to the ship for the cutting in.

A small affair, without excitement; yet big for Roy. It worked a change in the boy. He came back to the ship no longer a boy, but the makings of a man. He spoke loftily to Faith. He brushed shoulders with the men on equal terms and was proud to do so, altogether forgetting the days when he had liked to think himself their superior and to order them around.

Dan'l catered to the new mood in the boy; he told Cap'n Wing in Roy's hearing that the youngster would make a whaleman, that he had never seen any one so cool at the striking of his first whale. Roy swelled visibly.

Brander's initiation as an officer of the Sally came at the same time; and a bit of luck made it possible for the fourth mate to prove his mettle. When they sighted spouts in three quarters, that morning, the mate had chosen to go after a lone bull; old Tichel and Brander attacked a small pod to the eastward; and Willis Cox went north to try for a fish there.

Brander gave Tichel right of way, since the old man was his superior officer; and they came upon the pod with a matter of seconds to choose between them. The whales were disappointingly small; nevertheless, Tichel attacked the largest, and Brander took the one that fell to him. His irons went home a moment after Tichel's;

his whale leaped into the first blind struggle, not fleeing, but fighting to shake off the iron.

Now it is customary among whalers to wait till this first flurry has passed, to allow the whale to run out his own strength, and then to pull in for the finishing stroke. But Brander was ambitious; the whale was small. He changed places with Loum, and shouted orders to his men to haul in the loose coils of line that had been thrown over with the irons. The whale was circling, rolling, striking with its flukes; it had not seen them, gave them no heed, but the very blindness of its struggles made it a greater menace.

They drew in on the whale; and Loum at the steering-oar swung Brander against the monster's flank. Brander got home his lance in three thrusts before they were forced to draw clear to avoid the whale's renewed struggles. But those three were enough; the spout crimsoned; he loosed and backed away from the final flurry, and the whale was dead ten minutes from the time when the first iron went home.

That was exploit enough to prove Brander's ability; his quick kill marked him as a man who knew his job. He could have afforded to be content; but when his whale was fin out and he looked around, he was in time to see trouble come upon James Tichel.

The whale Tichel struck had sounded; and just after Brander killed it breached before his eyes, under the very bows of Tichel's boat. Brander saw the black column of its body rise up and up from the sea; it seemed to ascend endlessly. Then it toppled, and slowly fell, and struck the water so resoundingly that for a moment both the whale and Tichel's boat were hidden. Tichel was dodging desperately to get clear; but the wallowing whale rolled toward him, over him, smothering his craft.

Brander, when the tossing and tormented water quieted, saw the bobbing heads of the men, the boat just awash, the gear floating all around. The whale showed no immediate disposition to run; it was rolling in a frenzy, bending double as if to tear at its own wounds.

Brander stuck a marking-waif in his own whale, drove his men to their oars, cut across to see that Tichel and the others were kept afloat by the boat, and then managed to pick up one of the floating tubs of line, to which the whale was still at-

tached. The rest was easy enough; the whale fought its strength away, and Brander made his kill.

Willis Cox had failed to get fast; the whales he sought to attack took fright as he approached them, and his game got away with a white slash across the blubber, where Long Jim's desperate cast of the harpoon had gone wild. So Willis rowed to join Brander, picked up Tichel and his men, and took their boat and Tichel's whale, which Brander had killed, in tow. Brander took the other; they worked back to the Sally. When they reached the ship, Noll Wing clapped Brander on the shoulder and applauded him.

Two whales at a time is as much as any whaler cares to handle; the Sally had three. A blow of any violence would have made it impossible for them to cut in even one of the carcasses before the steady heat of the southern seas rendered them unfit; but no squall came. The luck of the Sally had turned—and turned in earnest.

The men welcomed the hard work after their long idleness; they toiled at the windlass and the gangway with the heartiest will. They raised chanteys as they walked the blanket-pieces up to the main head or slacked them down the deck to be cut and stowed in the blubber-room below the main hatch. The intoxication of the toil took possession of them; they went at it singing and exultant and afire; and even Noll caught the spirit of the day from them. Youth flooded back into the man; his shoulders straightened; his chest seemed to swell before their eyes. Faith, watching him, thought he was like the man she had loved. She was, for a time, very happy.

The fever of it got into Noll's blood; and when they killed another whale the third day after, he swore that at the next chance he would himself lower for the chase. He fed on the thought. Faith, fearful for him, ventured to protest; her first thought was ever that on Noll's safety depended the safety of the Sally, that Noll's first duty was to bring the Sally Sims safely home again. She told Noll this—told him his place was with the ship.

"The Sally is your charge," she said. "You ought not to risk yourself."

He laughed at her tempestuously.

"By God," he cried, "I was never a man to send men where I was afeared to go! Let be, Faith. You coddle me like a child; and I am not a child at all. Let be!"

Faith surrendered helplessly; but she hoped he would forget, would not keep his word. He might have forgotten as she hoped; he was sinking back into his old lassitude when the masthead men sighted the next whale; but Dan'l sought Noll out and said anxiously:

"Best think better of it, sir. This looks like a big whale—a hard customer."

Noll had so nearly forgotten that he asked:

"Think better of what, man?"

Dan'l smiled, as if he were pleased.

"I thought you meant to lower," he said.

"You do well to change your mind. Stay aboard here; leave us to handle him."

Which was like a goad to Noll, as Dan'l must have known it would be. The captain laughed angrily, thrust Dan'l aside, took the mate's own boat, with Roy on the after thwart, and lowered.

Faith was anxious; she found chance to say to Brander, as the other boats were striking the water:

"Look after him, Mr. Brander!"

And Brander nodded reassuringly.

Dan'l climbed into the rigging to watch the battle; he scarce took his glass from his eye. What he hoped for, whether he thought chance and the whale might wipe Noll from his path, only Dan'l knew.

This whale, as it chanced, was sighted at early morning; and this was as well. A big bull, the creature lay quietly, just awash, while the captain's boat came upon it from behind. It stirred not at all till Noll Wing swung hard on the long steering-oar, brought them in against the black side, and bellowed to Silva:

"Let go! Let go the irons!"

Silva knew his work as well as any man; and he got both harpoons home to the hitches, and threw the line clear as the bull leaped bodily forward and upward, half out of the water, and whirled in a smothering turmoil of spray and tortured foam to escape the blades that bit him. Noll swung them out of his way and shouted to Silva:

"Aft, now! Let me be at him, man!"

Silva came stumbling back across the thwarts to take the steering-oar, while Noll went forward, chose his lance, and braced himself in the bow.

The whale, his first torment dulled, had stopped his struggle and lay still, swinging slowly around in the water. It was as if he looked about to discover what it was that had attacked him; and old Tichel—the

other boats were standing by in a half-circle about Noll and the whale—bawled across the water:

"Ware, sir! He's looking for you!"

Noll heard and waved his hand defiantly; and at the same time the whale saw Noll's boat and charged it.

The whale, as has been said, would be invulnerable if his wit but matched his bulk. It does not. Furthermore, the average whale will not fight at all, but runs; and it is his efforts to escape that blindly cause the tragedies of the fisheries. But when he does attack, he attacks almost always in the same way. The sperm-whale, the cachalot, trusts to his jaw; he bites; and his enemy is not the men in the boat, but the boat itself. Perhaps he cannot see the men; his eyes are small and set far back on either side of his great head. Certainly, when once a boat is smashed, it is rare for a whale deliberately to try to destroy the men in the water.

The sperm-whale tries to bite; the right whale—it is from him that whalebone comes—strikes with his vast flukes. He will lie quietly in the water and brush his flukes back and forth across the surface, feeling for his enemy. If they touch a floating tub, an oar, a man, they coil up like an enormous spring and slap down with a blow that crushes utterly whatever they may strike. The whalemén have a proverb: "Ware the sperm-whale's jaw and the right whale's flukes"; and there is more truth than poetry in it.

The whale that Noll had struck set out to catch Noll's boat and smash it in his jaws. His very eagerness was, for a long time, the boat's salvation. The whale was bulky, a full eighty feet long, and accordingly unwieldy. A man on foot can, if he be sufficiently agile, dodge a bull in an open field; by the same token a thirty-foot whale-boat, flat-bottomed, answering like magic to the very thought of the men who handle her, can dodge a hundred-barrel bull whale. Noll's boat dodged; the men used their oars at Noll's command, and Silva in the stern swung her around as on a pivot with a single sweep. The whale surged past, the water boiling away from its huge head.

The whale surged past, and turned to charge again. This time, as it passed, Noll touched the creature with his lance, but the prick of it was no more than the dart in the neck of a fighting bull. It goaded the whale,



and nothing more. He charged with fury; his very fury was their safety.

Noll struck the whale at a little after nine o'clock in the morning. At noon the vast beast was still fighting, with no sign of weariness. It charged back and forth, back and forth; and the men swung the boat out of its way; and their muscles strained, their teeth ground together, the sweat poured from them with their efforts. They were intoxicated with the battle.

Noll, in the bow, bellowed and shouted his defiance; the men yelled at every stroke; they shook their fists at the whale as he raged past them. And Silva, astern, snatching them again and again from the jaws of destruction, grinned between tight lips, and plied his oar.

A little after noon the whale swung past Noll with such momentum that he was carried out to the rim of the circle in which the fight was staged, and saw Tichel's boat there. Any boat was fair game to the monster; and Tichel had grown careless with watching the breath-taking struggle. He had forgotten his own peril; he expected the whale to turn back on Noll again.

It did not; it went for him, and its jaws sheared through the very waist of his boat so that the two halves fell away on either side of the vast head. The men had time to jump clear; there was no man hurt—save for the strangling of the salt water—and the whale seemed to feel himself the victor, for he lay still, as if to rest upon his laurels.

Willis Cox was nearest; he drove his boat that way, and stood in the bow with lance in hand to strike. But Noll, hauling up desperately on the line, bellowed to him: "Let be, Willis! He's mine!" And Willis sheered off.

Then the whale felt the tug of the line and whirled once more to the battle. Willis picked up Tichel and his men, and towed the halves of the boat away back to the ship. The Sally was standing by, a mile from the battle. Such whales as this could sink the Sally herself with a battering blow in the flank. It was dangerous to come too near. Willis put Tichel and his men aboard, and went back to wait and be ready to answer any command from Noll.

The fifth hour of the battle was beginning. The whale was tireless. Noll, in the bow of his boat, seemed as untired as the beast he fought; but his men, even Silva, were wearying behind him.

It was this weariness that presently gave the whale his chance. He charged, and Silva's thrust on the long oar was a shade too late. The boat slipped out of reach of the crashing jaws; but the driving flukes caught it and it was overturned. The gear flew out.

Noll, in the bow, clung to the gunwale for an instant as the boat was overthrown—long enough to wrench out the pin that held the line in the crotch in the boat's bow. Silva, astern, would have cut; his hatchet was ready, but Noll shouted:

"No, by God! Let be!"

Then they were all in the water, tumbling in the surges thrown back by the passage of the monster. And the whale drove by, turned, saw no boat upon the water, thought victory was come.

Brander, at this time, was a quarter-mile away. When the boat went over he yelled to his men:

"Pull! Oh, pull!"

They bent their stout oars with the first hot tug; fresh men, untired, hungry these hours past for a chance at the battle. Brander started toward where lay the capsized boat, the swimming men. Noll Wing lifted a commanding arm and beckoned him to make all speed.

A whale-boat is as speedy as any oared craft short of a racing-shell; and Brander's men knew their work. They cut across the vision of the loafing whale; and the beast turned upon this new attacker with undiminished vigor.

Brander's eyes narrowed as he judged their distance from the drifting boat; he swerved a little to meet the coming whale head-on. The whale plowed at him. They met fifty yards to one side of the spot where the boat was floating; and as they met, Brander dodged past the monster's very jaw and slid astern of him. Before the whale could turn he was alongside the capsized boat, dragging Noll over his own gunwale.

He dragged Noll in; and he saw then that the captain held in his hand a loop of the line that was fast to the whale. Brander grinned with delighted appreciation. Noll straightened, brushed Brander back without regarding him, and passed the line to the men in Brander's boat.

"Haul in!" he roared. "Get that stowed aboard here. By God, we'll get that whale!"

They worked like mad, coiling the slack line in the waist, while Noll fitted it into

the crotch and pinned it there. The whale was back at them by then; they dodged again. And this time, as the creature swung past, Loum — Brander's boat-steerer — brought them in close against the monster's flank before dodging out to evade the smashing flukes. In that instant Noll saw his chance, and drove home his lance to half its length.

It was the first fair wound the whale had taken—a wound not fatal, not even serious. Nevertheless, it seemed to take the fight out of the beast. He sulked for a moment, then began—for the first time in more than five hours' fighting—to run.

The line whipped out through the crotch in the bow; the men tailed on to it, and let it go as slowly as might be, while Loum swung the steering-oar, to keep them in the creature's track.

Noll, in the bow, was like a man glorified. His cap was pulled tight about his head; he had flung away his coat, and his shirt was open half-way to the waist. The spray lashed him; his wet garments clung to his great torso. His right hand held the lance, point upward, butt in the bottom of the boat; his left rested on the line that quivered to the tugging of the whale. His knee was braced on the bow. A heroic figure, a figure of strength magnificent, he was like a statue as the whale-boat sliced the waves; and his lips smiled, and his eyes were keen and grim.

The line slipped out through the burning fingers of the men; the whale raced on. Abruptly Noll snapped over his shoulder:

"Haul in, Mr. Brander!"

Brander, at Noll's back, gave the word to the men; and they began to take back the line they had given the whale in the beginning. It came in slowly, stubbornly; but it came.

They drew up on the whale that fled before them. They drew up till the smashing strokes of the flukes, as the creature swam, no more than cleared their bow. They drew up there, and sheered out under the thrust of Loum's long oar, and still drew on. They were abreast of the flukes; they swung in ahead of them; they slid, suddenly, against the whale's very side.

The end came with curious abruptness. The whale, at the touch of the boat against his side, rolled a little away from them so that his belly was half exposed. The "life" of a whale, that mass of centering blood-

vessels which the lance must find, lies low. Noll knew where it lay; and as the whale thus rolled he saw his mark. He drove the lean lance hard—drove it so hard there was no time to pull it out for a second thrust—nor any need. It was snatched from his hands as the whale rolled back toward them.

Loum's oar swung; they loosed line and shot away at a tangent to the whale's course.

"Let be, let be, men! He's done!" Noll cried exultantly, his hands flung high.

They saw, within a matter of seconds, that he was right. The whale stopped; he slowly turned; he lay quiet for an instant, as if counting his hurts. The misty white of his spout was reddened by a crimson tint; it became a crimson flood. It roared out of the spout-hole driven by the monster's panting breath. The whale turned slowly on his side a little, began to swim.

A trout, hooked through the head and thrown back into the pool, will sometimes race in desperate circles, battering helplessly against the bank, the bottom of the pool, the sunken logs. Thus this monstrous creature now swam in a circle that centered about the boat where Noll and the others watched; that tore the water and flung it in on them. Faster and faster, till it seemed his great heart must burst with his own labors. And at the end, flung half clear of the water, threw his vast bulk forward, surged idly ahead, slowed, and was still.

"Fin out, by God! He's dead!" Noll cried.

A big whale, as big as most whalemén ever see, the biggest Noll himself had ever slain. A fitting thing; for old Noll Wing had driven his last lance. He was tired; he showed it when Brander gave the whale to Willis for towing back to the ship, and raced for the Sally, with Noll panting in the bow.

The fire was dying in the captain's eyes; he pulled Brander's coat about his great shoulders and huddled into it. He scarce moved when they reached the Sally. Brander helped him aboard.

"A great fight, sir!" cried Dan'l Tobey. "Six hours and two stove boats. But you killed!"

Noll wagged his old head, looked around for Faith, and leaned heavily upon her arm.

"Take me down, Faith," he said. "Take me down. I am very tired."

*(To be continued in the July number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)*